

al-Ghazzali
Alchemy of Happiness

(*Kimiyā al-saʿadat*)

Ḥujat al-Islām Abū Ḥāmid
Muḥammad Ghazzali Ṭūsī

VOLUME 1

TRANSLATED BY
JAY R. CROOK

INTRODUCTION BY
LALEH BAKHTIAR

SERIES EDITOR
SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR

GREAT BOOKS OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD

The first complete English translation of *The Alchemy of Happiness*, this is Imam Ghazzali's Persian summary of his famous Arabic treatise on morality and ethics in Islam, *The Revival of Religious Sciences*. In this work, Ghazzali details the many pitfalls, snares, and distractions—internal and external—that lie in wait to divert the traveler of the Way from attaining the goal which Ghazzali calls "spiritual happiness." But there are also defenders, guides, and helpers which the traveler may enlist in his aid if he recognizes them. In *The Alchemy* Ghazzali has provided the traveler of the Way with a critique of faith and a detailed guidebook to guide him safely to that goal. If he follows its counsels, he will successfully pass through the awesome tribunal of the Resurrection to achieve everlasting salvation, the highest degree of which is that state in which there remains neither fear of the terrors of hell nor appetite for the pleasures of Paradise. [It is the pure ecstasy of the loving Divine Presence:] absolute spiritual happiness.

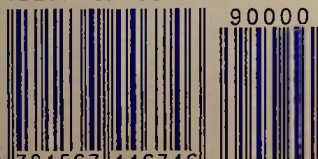
Jay R. Crook (Muhammad Nur) spent most of his working life in the Middle East, especially in Iran and Saudi Arabia. Hired by the Peace Corps as a field representative, he finished in 1971 as Deputy Director in the Iran program. He then enrolled in the Doctoral Program of Persian Literature for Foreigners at Tehran University and received his Ph.D. in 1978.

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IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

(Kīmiyā-yi Sa^cādat)

BY

Hujjat al-Islām

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī Ṭūsī
(AH450-505/1058-1111CE)

VOLUME I

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The cypress tree bending with the wind, the source for the
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*In memory of Muhammad Ayyub
of Mathurapur, Sylhet,
who introduced me to Islam*

The Alchemy of Happiness

Also by Jay R. Crook

The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective

The New Testament: An Islamic Perspective

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FOREWORD

God's last plenary revelation to present humanity came in the form of a book, al-Qur'ān, which for Muslims is also the book and is in fact known also as *Umm al-Kitāb* or Mother of All Books. While the peerless majesty of the revelation reduced the first generation of Muslims to silence, the echo of the Noble Book and its encouragement of acquiring knowledge could not but result in a culture which cherished books and honored scholars. This unmistakable emphasis of the Noble Quran on knowledge, combined with the synthetic power of Islam to absorb the learning of older civilizations to the extent that they conformed to the doctrine of unity (*al-tawhīd*), gave rise to a vast and diversified intellectual life which for the past thirteen centuries has produced millions of works dealing with nearly every field of knowledge from the religious sciences, theology and philosophy to the natural sciences, from law to music, and from poetry to politics.

Islamic civilization was a lake into which flowed streams from many civilizations: Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Byzantine, Persian, Indian and even Chinese. In this lake, the various elements became synthesized into a new body of water which itself became the source for numerous tributaries that have watered the various lands of *Dār al-Islām*. Furthermore, Islamic civilization created works which had profound influence upon at least three major civilizations outside of the Islamic world: the Far Eastern, the Indian and the Western besides creating numerous masterly works whose influence has remained confined within the Islamic world. Such works in both categories contain a precious message for humanity as a whole and need to be made known by the world at large today.

Most treatises in Islamic civilization were written in the language of the Quranic revelation, Arabic, followed by the only other universal language of Islamic civilization, Persian. But important works have also been written in Turkish, Urdu, Bengali, Malay, Swahili, Berber, and numerous other languages including Chinese and, during this century, even English and French. Nor have all the works in Arabic been written by Arabs, nor all the works in Persian by Persians. Numerous treatises in Arabic were written by Persians and later Turks, Indians, Berbers and Black Africans while many books in the Persian language were composed by Indians, Turks and Central Asians. The body of works written within the confines of Islamic civilization belongs to the whole of that civilization and in classical times, in fact, important books became known rapidly from Morocco to India and later Southeast Asia.

The Great Books of the Islamic World series seeks to make some of the most important works produced in Islamic civilization, primarily in Arabic and Persian, available in English so that these treasures of Islamic thought can be appreciated by those who do not possess the facility to benefit from them in the original languages. The audience to which the series addresses itself is predominantly the Western English reading public, but the series is also meant for Muslims themselves who have facility with the English language and also for non-Muslims and non-Westerners who are now becoming ever more knowledgeable in English and who might wish to gain deeper knowledge of the Islamic intellectual universe.

We hope that with the help of God, Exalted is His Majesty, this series will be successfully completed and that by providing a clear and readable translation of some of the great masterpieces of Islamic thought in English, this series will be able to create better understanding of Islam in the world at large and make accessible some of the treasures of traditional thought which, although Islamic in genesis, belong to all human beings who are interested in true knowledge in whatever form it appears, *wa mā tawfiqunā illā billāh*.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr
Washington DC, June, 1997

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

In AH450/1058CE Hujjat al-Islām Abū Hāmid Imām al-Ghazzālī was born at Tus (*Tūs*), now a suburb of modern Mashhad, but then the most important city of that region of Khorasan, what is now northeastern Iran. He was educated first at Tus, then at Gorgan, and finally at Nishapur. The famous Seljuq vizier Nizam al-Mulk invited him to his court. So impressed was the vizier by Ghazzālī's scholarship that in AH484/1091CE he appointed him chief professor at the Nizamiyah College in Baghdad. Ghazzālī became critical of the Muslim philosophers who had been influenced by Neoplatonism, and he passed through a spiritual crisis that at times left him incapable of lecturing. In AH488/1095CE, he abandoned his teaching and left Baghdad on the pretext of performing the Greater Pilgrimage. After making arrangements for his family, he disposed of his worldly goods and became a poor Sufi. He spent time at Damascus, Jerusalem, and Makkah, before returning to his birthplace where disciples soon collected around him. He was persuaded to return to teaching at the Nizamiyah in Baghdad in AH499-500/1105-6CE, where he remained until a year before his death that took place at Tus AH505/1111CE at the comparatively young age of 53.¹

Towards the end of his active and eventful life, possibly feeling the need to increase the audience for his message, Ghazzālī embarked upon the writing a Persian summary of his encyclopedic Arabic treatise on religion and the Way, *The Revival of the Religious Sciences* (*Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*).² It differs from the Arabic original in that Ghazzālī prefixed his summary with a *Prolegomena*, which perhaps represents his desire to express some later thoughts on a number of topics (see the Table of Contents). It represents about 10% of the Persian text of the *Alchemy*.

In the Islamic world of his era, Arabic was the medium for serious works of religion and science, as was Latin in the Europe of the same period. After the Arab conquest of Iran in the first Islamic (7th CE) century, Pahlavi, the Persian of the overthrown Sassanian dynasty of Iran, flickered out, except for a liturgical use among the remaining Zoroastrians. As the general population gradually converted to Islam,

¹ EB, and other sources.

² In HK's Introduction to his edition of the text, he attributes the *Revival* to the beginning of the decade AH488-99/1095-1105CE, while the *Alchemy* was written about two-thirds of the way through that period, say about AH495/1102CE.

Arabic became the language of government and study. During the third Islamic (9th CE) century, Persian—now written in the easier Arabic script and with ever-increasing borrowings from Arabic—began to re-emerge as a literary language. With the patronage of provincial courts, notably the Samanids based in southern central Asia and eastern Khorasan, Persian poets began to produce that body of epics, songs, and *belles lettres* that have won the admiration of the world. Commentaries on the Quran, histories, and other more serious works in Persian quickly followed.

It was natural, therefore, that Ghazzali, a native of Khorasan, the birthplace of this Persian literary renaissance,³ would want to present a less technical version of the *Revival* for the edification of his fellow Persian-speakers. The fruit of this desire, *The Alchemy of Happiness*, of which this is the first complete translation into English, is a compendium of religious law, ethics, and morals with illustrative supporting anecdotes. In it, Ghazzali refers to the *Revival* many times as a reference for further elaboration of his arguments and more technical explanations. Nonetheless, he assumes that his readership has more than a passing acquaintance of Arabic and the contents of the Holy Quran, as educated people in the West would have been expected to be familiar with Latin and Greek as a matter of course until the 20th century. *The Alchemy of Happiness* contains many citations from the Quran in Arabic as well as other occasional passages left without Persian translation. For less familiar passages, or when he wants to point up some aspect of the Arabic being quoted, Ghazzali supplies a translation or an expansion. The translator has not always included his verbatim translations, but has included many of his expansions, paraphrases, or departures from the Arabic.

The aim of *The Alchemy of Happiness* is to bring man into that state of love for and acceptance by God Most High that Ghazzali calls “(spiritual) happiness” (*sa‘ādat*). The *Alchemy* is nothing less than a manual, a guidebook, for the wayfarer’s progress to that goal. For Ghazzali, the purpose of this world is to gather the provisions—good deeds (*ḥasanāt*) and spiritual reward (*thawāb*)—for the next world. There are many pitfalls, snares, traps, and distractions lying in wait for the careless wayfarer. Ghazzali treats these in considerable detail in the Third Pillar (The Destroyers). At the same time, God in His wisdom has provided the traveler with the means to avoid them—if he takes heed, and these are elaborated upon in Fourth Pillar (The Deliverers). The goal is to achieve the highest state of love for God in which the self is annihilated in God, but the soul continues. In this state there remains

³ Modern Khorasan is the northeastern section of Iran, but in Ghazzali’s time, the term referred to a much vaster area, stretching well into modern Afghanistan and Central Asia.

neither fear of hell nor appetite for Paradise; just the pure ecstasy of the contemplation of the Divine Presence. Not all will achieve this, but there are lesser states of spiritual reward desirable in themselves, represented—for the good—by the levels of Paradise; and—for the evil—by its contrary: the levels of hell.

There is terror and delight, fear and hope, and consolation and eloquent exhortation in this wide-ranging work; it aims directly at the heart and the soul of the reader as it investigates the many aspects of the religious experience. The problems, spiritual dilemmas, and crises of faith of Ghazzali's medieval world are, in essence, not so different from those of our own era. I must confess that at times I was deeply affected, spiritually and intellectually, by Ghazzali's persuasive words. I hope that I have been able to convey at least some of those feelings in this translation.

The organization of this enormous undertaking is straightforward. After a brief Introduction and a list of the Contents, there is a Prolegomena of sections called "Topics" (*ʿunwān*), four in number, in which various kinds of necessary basic knowledge are expounded. They represent about 10% of the text and lay the groundwork for the main part of the book that is divided into four "Pillars" (*rukn*), which should not be confused by the reader with the more famous Five Pillars of Islam. The First Pillar (*The Acts of Worship*) is concerned with the performance and significance of religious duties. The Second Pillar (*Mutual Relations*) deals with a person's role in relation to the world and its demands. The Third and Fourth Pillars, as noted above, are concerned with avoiding the dangers (*The Destroyers*) while on the journey and with achieving salvation (*The Deliverers*) at its end. Each of these Pillars consists of ten chapters, so that the entire work has forty-four basic subdivisions, preceded by a short Introduction. Having said all that he wanted to say, Ghazzali does not linger and ends the *Alchemy* rather abruptly with a brief prayer.

It should also be remarked that there is not total consistency in headings between the two editions I have used for this translation, nor is there total internal consistency. Exact wordings vary, and I have reproduced these inconsistencies rather than attempting to force them into a single uniform format. The general purport of these variations, however, is the same and no confusion should arise about content because of them.

The internal organization of each chapter varies, but it generally contains exposition, analyses, and recommendations followed by illustrative anecdotes drawn from the Traditions of the Prophet, the Companions, pre-Islamic prophets, and noted scholars and ascetics of the early Islamic era. Those sections labeled "Excursus" (*faṣl*) are something like Ghazzali's footnotes or digressions.

Ghazzali's Persian is fluent and not so heavily Arabicized as one might expect, considering the subject matter. Taking advantage of the multiple meanings of the conjunction *kīh*,⁴ he piles clause upon clause, sentence upon sentence, and argument upon argument, as though he were addressing the reader personally.

Unlike Arabic and English, Persian does not have gender-specific pronouns. Both Arabic and English employ the "general" masculine when not specifying gender or when members of both sexes are present, or being referred to jointly. "Everyone should bring his books" means "each person (male or female) should bring his (or her) books."⁵ Consequently, the female reader should not feel slighted or ignored when the translator uses this general masculine. Ghazzali certainly did not intend to restrict salvation and spiritual happiness to males. In the Holy Quran, God promises both to the deserving "believing men and believing women," equally, many times.

Ghazzali uses the third person singular ("one should do this," "he should do that") much of the time in his text, so that when he departs from this to address the reader directly, the effect is quite forceful. He occasionally switches to *thou* (sing.) or *ye* (pl.) in mid-sentence! Mention of the second person brings up another point. In classical Persian and Arabic, distinctions are made between the second person singular and plural, as in Elizabethan English. It is a great loss to English that we no longer make that distinction in the modern language. There are occasions when confusion can result. Does "you" mean just one individual or a whole group being addressed? In the case of the Arabic Quran, this distinction can be crucial. Similar problems can arise in Persian. Therefore, in this translation, I have translated the second person in accordance with the classical (now chiefly poetic) rules. *Thou* and its forms are used for the second person singular, rather than the more impersonal and less precise *you*. Attendant verbs are consequently affected. In any event, *thou* better expresses the hoped for intimacy between God and man and Ghazzali and his reader than does *you*.

Technical terms: There are many religious and spiritual terms that have no exact one-word equivalent in English. The practice in this translation is to render them into English, usually with the original Persian or Arabic word in parentheses, especially at the time of first use. *Namāz* (Persian) and *ṣalāh* (Arabic) are commonly translated as "prayer," but in reality, these are formal religious services with strict rules and are not at all like the image the word brings to the Christian mind of conversation with God, sometimes in a set prayer such as the

⁴ *kīh* can mean: that, he/she who, while, whereas, and, then, nay, whom, lest, for, whether, because, saying, namely, who?, etc. The possibilities seem endless.

⁵ "Everyone should bring their books," though frequently heard (and encountered in print), is an obvious solecism.

Lord's Prayer, and sometimes a simple outpouring from the heart. These things exist in Islam, but they are called *duʿā* (supplicating God) and *munājāt* (conversation with God). They often follow *namāz/ṣalāh*, but are not part of it, at least in a technical sense. *Namāz/ṣalāh* is a religious service, akin to a mass in the Roman Catholic Church.

To emphasize this distinction, *namāz/ṣalāh* is translated as "formal prayer." There are different kinds of formal prayer, some obligatory, some not. There are different times for the prayers, etc., some obligatory, some not; so in order to convey exactly what it is Ghazzali is talking about, *namāz-i zuhr* is translated as "the noon obligatory formal prayer"; cumbersome, but accurate. When one is pouring one's heart out to God, sitting alone, it is called "conversation with God" (*munājāt*). I have tried to be as explicit as possible when translating these unfamiliar terms. When the meaning cannot be incorporated fully into the text without becoming a distraction, more information will be found in the footnotes.

A word about the texts: When the late Prof. Ahmad Aram (AA) set out to prepare an edition of this work, he examined an edition printed in India during the 19th century at the beginning of his effort. He considered it a good text and remarks: "It appears that it was prepared with extreme care and research," but he notes regretfully that corruptions had crept into the text. After examining other manuscripts and editions, he finally decided to use the copy belonging to a Mr. Sabuhi as the basis for his edition, even though it is missing about half of the fourth part. He supplied the missing parts and filled lacunae by comparison with several other manuscripts in the National Library (Tehran). His edition was first published in AHS1320/1941CE.

The first half of the critical edition by Dr. Husayn Khadiv-Jam (HK) was first published in AHS1354/1975CE. Together with access to a recently published Persian translation of the *Revival*, he was able to refer to half a dozen additional manuscripts for the preparation of his edition. In addition, unlike the AA text available to me, the HK edition is well supplied with indices and rather more notes, making the translator's task much easier. As a result, I have used the HK text as the primary text for making this translation and have used the AA text secondarily. The edition of the HK that I have used was published, with a new introduction, in AHS1361/1982CE. When I have felt it would be useful, I have occasionally incorporated material from the AA text to supplement the HK text. Such material is inserted between brackets. Other differences are mentioned in footnotes.

It should be remarked that all of the enumerations, divisions, and headings found in the present text are not necessarily the work of Ghazzali himself. Later copyists and redactors doubtless had a hand in the present shape of the text. The two texts I have consulted agree in the

larger divisions but differ in subdivisions. I have endeavored to present the divisions in a way that will be the most useful for the reader.

About some of the mechanics of the translation: Punctuation and paragraphing, as we know them, were not used in Arabic and Persian until recent times, and then in a rather casual imitation of Western (especially French) practice. Even now, Persian punctuation is at best erratic and occasionally misleading; to save space perhaps, paragraphing is often skimpy. This is true of both HK and AA editions of the *Alchemy*. Instead of punctuation, classical writers in Persian and Arabic simply joined clauses with an “and” or a more appropriate conjunction when the context warranted it, as does the King James version of the Bible which follows a similar Hebrew practice. There were rarely paragraphic divisions, probably because (handmade) paper, though much cheaper than vellum, was still expensive and it had to be used to the maximum. Chapter headings were often given in a different colored ink (usually red) or by means of overlining.⁶ Many of these “and”s have been omitted in translation as contrary to English style and I have tried to be more generous in paragraphing.

Brackets are used in accordance with their use in the HK text, although material added from the AA text is also bracketed, with a note. Because of the plethora of parentheses and brackets added to the text, Ghazzali’s words and phrases of a parenthetical nature, which would normally be enclosed by parentheses, are distinguished by dashes in this translation.

Parentheses also enclose material I have inserted as clarification, to indicate words justified by the text but not used in it; for clarifying numbers inserted for the reader’s convenience; and for the transliterations from Persian and Arabic of important or significant words for the serious student (see “Italics” below). In Quranic quotations, the portions between parentheses are expansions I have added from the Quran for purpose of clarification; usually in a place where Ghazzali would assume that the reader would be familiar with the full text. When Ghazzali uses one part of a proper name (see “Names” below), I have sometimes found it necessary to include a more familiar part of the name in parentheses. The exception to this is the (S) put after the name or title of the Prophet and (R) or (A) for certain other persons when it is part of the text (see below). I should also like to point out here that the word “Practice,” when capitalized, refers to the Practice of the Prophet (*sunnatu rasūli-llāh*), as recorded in the Traditions and biographies.

⁶ Overlining: drawing a line above a word or words as opposed to the English practice of drawing a line under them; that is, underlining.

With respect to the transliterations, Persian forms are given preference in transliteration where the usage differs from Arabic. The system of transliteration (see p. xxii) is based upon what is becoming the standard usage. However, when applied to Persian, there are some differences. The consonant *w* in Arabic becomes *v* in Persian. To use *w* in Persian words would be misleading. There are also some changes with respect to vowels: the Arabic *kisrah* (short *i*) is generally pronounced short *e* in Persian, but will appear here as *i*, as in Arabic to avoid confusion. In Persian pronunciation, the Arabic consonants *th* and *ṣ* become *s*; *h* is *h*; *dh*, *d*, *z* are all pronounced *z*; *ṭ* is *t*; *ʿayn* is reduced to a glottal stop (*hamzah*) or ignored; *q* commonly is pronounced like *ghayn*. On the other hand, Persian has four letters (*p*, *ch*, *zh*, and hard *g*) not found in standard Arabic.

I have followed the orthography presumably used by Ghazzali as evidenced by the texts. His usage occasionally departs from what is now considered standard, particularly with respect to *hamzah* which, when followed by a *kasrah* (the short vowel *i*), he converts into *y*. For example: Persian *faḏāyil* (virtues) for Arabic *faḏā'il*; *ṣāyim* (fasting/faster) for *ṣā'im*. At the end of a word, it is usually dropped: *balā* for *balā'* (affliction). (These modifications, especially the latter, are also common in modern standard Persian.)

In addition, over the centuries there has been a considerable shift in Persian usage with respect to words borrowed from the Arabic feminine ending, the so-called "round *t*."⁷ In Arabic, it is unpronounced except when followed in liaison with a vowel: then it is pronounced as *t*. The Persian practice is to write the letter *H* when it is unpronounced or the letter *t* when pronounced. Ghazzali's text represents an earlier stage in this process and many words now ending in *h* in standard Persian end in *t* in the *Alchemy*. Examples are numerous, such as *irādat* for (modern) *irādah*.

The system of transliteration employed in this work is based on orthography, not pronunciation. The differences in Arabic chiefly involve the "sun" letters and the "moon" letters, the weak letters, and the vowelizing of *hamzatu-l-waṣl*.⁸ For Persian, the principal difference is the

⁷ The round *t* is an *h* written with the two dots of a *t* over it. In Arabic, this is the standard feminine singular ending. In Persian orthography, the dots are never written (except in set phrases borrowed from Arabic) and it becomes either an unpronounced *h* or a pronounced *t* and is written as such.

⁸ The Arabic alphabet consists of 28 (some scholars say 29, including *hamzah* as a separate letter), half of which are "sun" letters and the other half "moon" letters. The significance of this in pronunciation is that when the definite article *al* precedes a noun or an adjective, it is pronounced *al*, as in *al-qamar* (the moon). When the definite article precedes a sun letter, it is written the same (*al*) but pronounced according to the first letter of the following word, as in *ash-shams* (the sun). The "weak" letters are *alif*, *w*, and *y*. Their usage at the end of a word can create difficulties, but that need not concern

silent *w* after *kh*. For example, *khwud* is pronounced *khud*. *N* before *b* (and also before *p* in Persian) is pronounced *m* in both languages.

Italics are used for words, phrases, and sentences that are translated from those portions of the text that are in Arabic rather than Persian and to emphasize the occasional English word. In addition, transliterated Persian or Arabic words are given in italics, usually between parentheses, in the footnotes and occasionally in the text, especially in the four Topics. Those who know Persian and Arabic may notice stylistic differences between Persian and Arabic. In the transliterations, I have normally given the word as it appears in the text. Sometimes verbs have been put into the infinitive form. Certain set phrases, such as: "may He be honored and glorified," "God Most High," "may God have mercy upon him," "may God be pleased with him," and "peace be upon him," though actually Arabic, are not italicized as they are commonly employed and readily understood in Persian.

It is customary to use some phrase of blessing such as *ṣalāwāt Allāh ‘alayhi wa sallam* (May the blessings and peace of God be upon him!) following the utterance of the Prophet's name or station. This is represented by "(S)." However, the attentive reader may note that there are some exceptions to this usage and it is omitted: in this respect I have, for accuracy, followed the text, omitting it when it is not found in the principle text and no disrespect is intended. Furthermore, in some places the symbol (A) follows the name of other prophets. It is in place of the phrase *‘alayhi al-salām* (upon whom be peace) usually uttered following such a name. (R) is used to represent the Arabic phrase *May God be pleased with him/her/them* (*raḍiya-llāhu ‘alayhi/hā/him*).

Ghazzali generally uses the word *bandah* "servant or bondman," meaning here "servant (of God)," to indicate any human being. The form is slightly deprecatory, but in this case, it reflects man's humble position with respect to his Creator. In this context, it means something like "person" or "human being" or "man." I have translated it as "servant (of God)," except where it clearly refers to servants or slaves.

Persian is an Indo-European language and possesses a structure of verbal inflections and tenses similar to that of English, but their usage varies. I have generally translated them according to the rules of English usage. The word *guft*, meaning "he/she said" has frequently been changed in translation to "ask, reply, answer, declare, cry," etc., depending upon the context, in part to clarify who is saying what, and in accordance with English practice. For some reason, the repetition of *guft*

the reader here. The *hamzatu-l-waṣl* involves changes to the vowel *a* of *al* and these changes occur according to the case of the preceding word, too complicated to go into in this place. Consult any standard Arabic grammar for details of these and a few other idiosyncrasies of Arabic orthography. The Persian alphabet has all of the Arabic letters plus four consonants not found in Arabic.

does not sound boring in Persian and most Persians have no problem following the changing speakers, but our English ears require a little variation and help in distinguishing speakers. Names are often repeated, between parentheses, for identification and clarity. Because Persian verbs are fully conjugated as to number and person, pronouns are used much less frequently than they are in English. In English, only the form of the 3rd-person singular of the present tense (and compound tenses formed with the present) is distinctive, except in the case of the verb *to be* which has three forms instead of two in the present tense. (This does not include the 2nd-person singular forms of classical English that I have also employed, as noted above.)

Persian usage of plurals differs from that of English. In translation, I have followed the English rules. Interestingly enough, Ghazzali also uses the active "they said to him" with the passive meaning of "it was said to him," as is the practice in informal English speech. When no agent is apparent, I have usually rendered these in the passive voice, as exactly following Ghazzali's form can occasionally lead to confusion and yet another footnote. Also, "this" and "that" are sometimes used differently in Persian; I follow English usage. In this regard, it may be pertinent to point out that Persian does not have a definite article "the" (Arabic does: *al*), but it does have an indefinite postfix *ī* meaning "a/an" (neither English nor Arabic has this); this is omitted in transliterations except in phrases. When a Persian speaker wishes to stress definiteness, he uses the demonstrative adjectives "that" (*ān*) or "this" (*īn*).

Persons and unfamiliar places are explained in the footnotes the first time they occur. One should refer to the Index for unannotated names to locate where they are explained.

Names: In preparing biographical notes about the people Ghazzali quotes or refers to in the *Alchemy*, one encounters the problem of Arabic names, the basis for most Muslim names, Arab and non-Arab, in the time of Ghazzali and—to a great extent—in the present as well. First is the *kunyah* (nickname), then the personal or given name (*ism*), then the pedigree (*nasab*), then the epithet (*laqab*), and finally the surname of origin or tribe (*nisbah*). Poets usually used pen-names (*takhalluṣ*) rather than their own personal names.

For males, the *kunyah* is compounded with *abū*, literally "father." (There is a corresponding form for women, *umm* meaning "mother.") In the HK text, Ghazzali more often uses the dialectal *Bū* form in the *kunyah* (nickname), instead of the more standard *abū* (the AA text generally uses *Abū*). To avoid confusion and for easier indexing, all of these have changed to the standard *Abū* form throughout the text. Sometimes these "nicknames" are real, as when *Abū Muḥammad*, for example, really has a son of that name. At other times, they are metaphorical or based upon some peculiarity. *Abū Hurayrah*, for

instance, was one of the most important of the narrators of Traditions of the Prophet. His *kunyah* means "Father of the Kitten," as he was fond of cats. Others are less flattering: Caliph Maṣṣūr's *kunyah* was Abū Dawāniq, "the Father of Farthings," a reference to his parsimoniousness.

The given or personal name follows. These may be simple: Muḥammad, ʿAlī, ʿUmar, etc., or compound ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Niʿmat Allāh, etc. In Persian-speaking areas, the given name may of Iranian origin (Rustam, Jamshīd, Fīrūz, etc.) and in Turkic areas of Turkish origin (Tīmūr, Tughril, etc.) This is followed by the pedigree; that is the names of father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and so on. In Arabic usage these are separated by *bin* meaning "son of." Often this becomes *ibn* when it is used as a quasi-*kunyah* as in Ibn Sīrīn (Son of Sirin), Ibn Ishāq (Son of Ishaq), Ibn Hishām (Son of Hisham), etc. Men are often better known by that form than any other part of the name. When *ibn* is the first element of the name, it is written that way, but succeeding elements of the pedigree are separated by *bin*.⁹

The *laqab* is often honorific, descriptive, or titular, as in *al-Tawīl* (the Tall), *al-ʿAwar* (the One-eyed), *Jihāngīr* (Persian: "World-Taker"), *Nizām al-Mulk* (Order of the Kingdom).

The *nisbah* often gives us personal information about birth, origin, sect, tribe, clan, and even profession. These can be compounded into a series: *al-Hāshimī al-Kūfī al-Warrāq* (of the tribe of the Hashimites, from or living in the city of Kufah, the paper dealer). In the case of Ghazzali, we have Abū Hāmid (*kunyah*) Muḥammad (*ism*) bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad (*nasab*) (no *laqab*) al-Tūsī al-Ghazzālī (*nisbah* meaning from Tus, the Weaver).¹⁰

Dates are given with the Islamic lunar dating (AH) first and the Common Era dating second as: AH55/675CE. Because the Islamic calendar is lunar, its year is shorter. This results, where precise information is not available in overlapping entries: AH776/1374-5CE or AH638-9/1240CE, depending upon primary source. The months are explained in footnotes as they occur in the text, but in order to give the

⁹ *Bin* is written with the two letters *b-n* while *ibn* is written ʿ*b-n*. The *i* in both forms is an unwritten short vowel. The classical usage seems to have been to pronounce *b-n* as *ibn*; I have fully vowelized texts reflecting that pronunciation. However, scholarly works in which the word is transliterated support the alternative *bin* pronunciation. With the decay of case endings in spoken Arabic, this has become more prevalent. In this translation, following the orthography and to make a distinction between *alif-b-n* and *b-n*, I use *ibn* for the former and *bin* for the latter.

¹⁰ I am indebted to the information contained in the *Handbook of Oriental History* for this exposition of the problem of Arabic names. Ghazzali's name in the Arabic edition of *The Revival* in my possession gives his name and titles thus: *Al-ʿAllāmat al-Imām Hujjat al-Islām Abī Hāmid Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī* (The Very Learned, the Imam, the Proof of Islam, Abu Hamid Muḥammad bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Ghazzali).

reader an idea of the relationship of the months to each other, the following is their order: *Muḥarram*, *Safar*, *Rabīʿ al-Awwal*, *Rabīʿ al-Thānī*, *Jumādā al-Awlā*, *Jumādā al-Ākhirah*, *Rajab*, *Shaʿbān*, *Ramādān*, *Shawwāl*, *Dhū al-Qaʿdah*, *Dhū al-Ḥijjah*.

Each month is either 29 or 30 days long, depending upon the appearance of the new moon. The day commences at sunset, as it does in the Jewish calendar. No extra month is inserted to keep it in step with the solar calendar as is done in the Jewish lunar calendar. I have also made occasional use of the Islamic solar calendar used in Iran and Afghanistan. It is designated AHS. Weights and measures are explained as they occur. They vary greatly from time to time and place to place and exact equivalents are hard to come by. Estimates are provided.

In translating the quotations from the Holy Quran, I have referred to several well-known English translations, but the one to which I have referred more often than any other is that of Muhammad Pickthall, *The Glorious Qur'an* (see the Bibliography.)

Footnotes: These are devoted to explanations of points in the text unfamiliar to the general reader. In addition, short biographical notes are given (when information is available) about the several hundred persons quoted or referred to in the text, usually at the first occurrence. It should be remarked that in practice, the personal name is often avoided, and an individual may be referred to instead by his *kunyah* (Abū Bakr), *nasab* (Ibn Hishām), *laqab* (Nizām al-Mulk), or *nisbah* (al-Būkhārī). Readers should note that Yahyā bin Muʿādh may be listed in the index as Yahya Muʿadh (Persian usage) or Yahya bin Muʿadh (Arabic usage). Ghazzali uses both forms.¹¹ Where confusion is likely, additional footnotes direct the reader to where the pertinent information may be found.

While nothing can replace the original, I hope that the reader will gain some sense of the importance and scope of Ghazzali's Persian masterpiece from this translation and meditate upon its relevance of its prescription for salvation in the world of the present day.¹² I pray that he will overlook any inadequacies or infelicities in the translator's effort to bring this great book to a wider audience. May God Most High grant us all a share of the blessings of the vision offered by Imam Ghazzali. *Peace!*

JRC (Md. Nur), Tucson, 2008

¹¹ It may be remarked that in older Persian an *idāfah* was used in place of the *bin*. Yahyā Muʿādh would have been read *Yahyā-yi Muʿādh*, meaning "Yahya the son of Muʿadh," as does the Arabic *Yahyā bin Muʿādh*.

¹² Ghazzali's works were well known to the European scholars of the High Middle Ages who knew him as Algazel.

ABBREVIATIONS

Besides the standard conventional and bibliographical abbreviations, a few less familiar ones have also been used in the text:

AA	= Ahmad Aram text	chs.	= chapters
AH	= Hijri, Lunar	d.	= died
AHS	= Hijri, Solar	fl.	= flourished, active
Ar.	= Arabic	HK	= Husayn Khadiv text
BCE	= Before Common Era (= BC)	Per.	= Persian
c.	= circa (about, approximately)	pl.	= plural
CE	= Common Era (= AD)	rgd.	= reigned
ch.	= chapter	sing.	= singular
		v.	= verse
		vv.	= verses

TRANSLITERATIONS**Arabic Letters****Consonants**

ا	
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh

ص	s
ض	d
ط	t
ظ	z
ع	'
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y

Short Vowels

أ	a
أ	u
إ	i

Long Vowels

بَا	bā
بُو	bū
بِي	bī

Diphthongs

بَو	baw
بِي	bay

Persian Letters

پ	p
چ	ch
ژ	zh
گ	g

INTRODUCTION

BY LALEH BAKHTIAR, PH.D.

"...be not like those who forgot God and [eventually] God caused them to forget their 'self'..." (Q. 59:18-19)

There is nothing more timely today than a translation of this remarkable work on Islam by al-Ghazzali for two reasons: First of all, the results of recent studies of medicine-psychology and religious belief¹³ confirm that the religious model works in the healing process so traditional wisdom must be made available in English for all researchers as well as readers to be able to access it and draw upon it for areas of further research. Secondly, at a time when the world is confused by the varying beliefs of Muslims and is interested in studying what the majority of the world's Muslims believe, the works of al-Ghazzali provide the perfect opportunity.

Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali was born in the city of Tus, northwestern Iran, in AD 1058.¹⁴ He studied in Tus until he was twenty-seven when he moved to Baghdad. He was appointed as a professor at the Nizamiyyah college there when he was thirty-three. After four years of a strenuous schedule, he underwent a spiritual experience which convinced him that all of the knowledge he had gained was useless in comparison to gnosis (spiritual knowledge) or experiential knowledge of the Divine Presence. He realized unless he left his position and was free to search for this knowledge deeper within himself without worldly distractions, he would never attain it. He therefore provided for his family and left for Damascus and other well-known cities at that time.

When he was forty-eight, he returned to his birthplace where he lived for the next five years until his early death at the age of fifty-three.¹⁵ He left behind over 400 works, among them being his famous *Revival of the Religious Sciences (Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn)* which he wrote in Arabic. Over 2300 pages long, it is a compendium of Islamic

¹³ See works such as *Timeless Healing: The Power and Biology of Belief* by Herbert Benson; *Why God Won't Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* by Andrew Newberg, Eugene D'Aquili and Vince Rause; and *Handbook of Religion and Health* edited by Harold G. Koniz, Michael McCullough and David B. Larsen.

¹⁴ Other well known writers and poets born in Tus include Abu Yazid Bistami, Husayn bin Mansur Hallaj, Abu Said Abi-l-Khayr, Nizam al-Mulk, Firdawsi and Umar Khayyam.

¹⁵ See Bibliography to the Introduction for the numerous books that detail the life of al-Ghazzali. It is interesting to note that al-Ghazzali wrote the *Alchemy of Happiness* when the First Crusade ruled Jerusalem. Saladin arrived on the scene seventy-seven years after al-Ghazzali's death.

practices. A few years after he finished the *Revival*, he felt the need to write the same sort of compendium on being a Muslim in Persian. This is the entire work here translated into English for the first time which al-Ghazzali called the *Alchemy of Happiness*. It is a masterful textbook on traditional psychology.¹⁶

While modern Western psychology focuses on describing emotions, behavior or cognition, that is, what we feel, do and think without recourse to the basic principles or causes, traditional psychology is based on the same three centers, but like all traditional sciences, includes much more. Because of including metaphysics, theology, cosmology and the natural sciences as the basis or underlying principles for what we feel, do or think, it becomes a holistic psychology. The goal of traditional psychology is to assume the noble character traits, to overcome our ego which competes for our attention with our God-given instinct to attend to the One God. In this view, there cannot be two wills and therefore our free will has to be disciplined to submit to God's will (*islām*).

The word psychology comes from the Greek words "psyche" or "soul" and "logos." Psyche also means breath, spirit and refers to the animating principle of the universe. Logos means "word" and in the traditional view it refers to "the Word of God." The science of psychology, then, when it is true to its name, is the study of the Word of God within the human soul or spirit.

Al-Ghazzali's psychology is essentially that of monotheism and unity, the world view that "there is no god, but God" or "there is no deity, but God." It is to see the universe and all that is in it as aspects of the One God. The world view of monotheism (*tawhīd*) forms the underlying basis for traditional psychology.

By the word "tradition" we mean *al-dīn* which has been defined as: "truths or principles of a Divine Origin revealed or unveiled to mankind through a messenger along with the ramifications and application of these principles in different realms including law, social structure, art, symbols, the sciences and embracing Supreme Knowledge along with the means for its attainment."¹⁷

Tradition (*al-dīn*) is a point which is at one and the same time the Center and Origin of our being. Traditional psychology is oriented towards helping the individual as well as the human community find that Center as we prepare for the return to our Origin.

A monotheist (*ḥanīf*) like al-Ghazzali regards the whole universe as a unity, as a single form, a single living and conscious thing, possessing will, intelligence, feeling, and purpose, revolving in a just and

¹⁶ See below for the definition of traditional psychology which historically was called the science of ethics or practical wisdom (*ḥikmat al-ʿamali*).

¹⁷ Knowledge and the Sacred, p. 68.

orderly system in which there is no discrimination no matter what one's gender, color, race, class, or faith be. All comes from God and returns to God, while a polytheist (*mushrik*) views the universe as a discordant assemblage full of disunity, contradiction, and heterogeneity containing many independent and conflicting poles, unconnected desires, customs, purposes, wills, sexes, sects, colors, races, classes, and faiths.

The monotheistic worldview sees the universal unity in existence, a unity of three separate relationships: (1) our relationship with others, nature and the universe; (2) our relationship with God; (3) our relationship with our "self." These relationships are not alien to one another; there are no boundaries between them. They move in the same direction. Al-Ghazzali expresses this when he writes:

Then, know that there is a station in spiritual insight where, when a person reaches it, he really sees that all that exists is interconnected, one with another, and all are like one animate being. The relationship of the parts of the world, such as the heavens, the earth, the stars to each other, is like the relationship of the parts of one animate being to each other. The relationship of all the world to its Director—from one aspect; not from all aspects—is like the relationship of the kingdom of the body of an animal to the spirit and intellect which are its Director. Until a person recognizes this, that *Verily, God created Adam in His image*, it cannot be comprehended by his understanding.¹⁸

Other non-monotheistic religious worldviews see the Divinity—or even the plural of this—as existing in a special, metaphysical world of the gods, a higher world as contrasted with the lower world of nature and matter. They teach that God is separate from the world, created it and then left it alone. In the monotheistic worldview, God has never left and is the destination of the Return. In this view, our "self" fears only one Power and is answerable to only one Judge; turns to one direction (qiblah), orienting all hopes and desires to only one Source. A belief in monotheism gives us a sense of independence and liberation from everything other than God and a connectedness to the universe and all that it contains. Submission to God's Will alone liberates us from worshipping anything other than God and rebelling against anything else that purports to be God.

¹⁸ Alchemy, pp. 867-8.

AL-GHAZZALI'S THREE FUNDAMENTALS

Al-Ghazzali sees the basis for traditional psychology leading to self-development—which in essence is the greater struggle—as consisting of three fundamentals—the same three fundamentals confirmed by modern psychology and scientific studies—affect, behavior and cognition (the ABC of psychology). The first fundamental is knowledge (cognition, awareness or consciousness). The second he calls states (affect or emotion) that that knowledge or awareness produces in us. The third he calls act or deed—the action that results from our emotion that came from our knowledge or awareness of something.

*THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL: KNOWLEDGE
(COGNITION)*

According to al-Ghazzali, knowledge should be used to come to understand the articles of belief rather than accepting them on faith alone. The articles of belief include: the belief that God is One; the belief that God sent Prophets to guide mankind to Him and that Muhammad (S) is the Messenger and last Prophet who will be sent (until the end of time when Jesus (A) will return) and that the Quran is the last revelation; the belief in angels and the Scriptures; and the belief that after death we will be resurrected in the Hereafter and judged by God who will reward or punish us depending upon our intentions. Al-Ghazzali says: "It is the states of the heart, the place of our intentions, that holds us accountable."¹⁹

BELIEFS

Our beliefs are the guiding principles that give meaning and direction to our life. They filter our perceptions of the world. When we freely choose to believe something is true, a command is delivered to our spiritual heart (mind) telling us how to represent what we have come to believe to be true. When the process has been accomplished with Divine Grace (defined by al-Ghazzali as: the harmony, agreement and concord of our will and action with God's will), our beliefs can become our most effective force for creating the positive and good in our lives.

In explaining the importance of coming to the realization of the Oneness of God oneself and not accepting it because someone has told us, al-Ghazzali says:

¹⁹ This is a clear distinction with modern secular psychology which is limited to only treating a human being part by part instead of holistically. See *Alchemy* p 817.

Know that the first duty incumbent upon whoever becomes a Muslim is to know and believe the meaning of the utterance *There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Messenger of God*, which he pronounces with his tongue, understands in his soul, and believes so that he entertains no doubt about it. When he has believed and his soul is established firmly upon (that belief)—so that no doubt can touch it—it is sufficient as the basis of being a Muslim. Knowing it with evidence and proof is an individual duty incumbent upon every Muslim. The Prophet (S) did not command the Arabs to seek proofs, to study theology, or to look for doubts and the replies to them; rather, he was content with belief and faith.²⁰

He then defines what belief in submission to God's Will (*islām*) means:

Know that thou hast been created and that thou hast a Creator Who is the Creator of all the universe and all that it contains. He is One. He has neither partner nor associate. He is Unique, for He has no peer. He always was; His existence has no beginning. He always shall be; there is not end to His existence. His existence in eternity and infinity is necessary, for annihilation cannot touch Him. His existence is by His own essence. He needs nothing; but nothing is unneedful of Him. Rather, He is established by His Own essence, and everything else is established through Him.²¹

Al-Ghazzali mentions five sources for our beliefs:

(1) Our environment: how we grow up; models of success or failure we learn from; what is right and what is wrong; what is possible and what is impossible.

(2) Our experiences and events as we grow up.

(3) Knowledge: what we know and do not know; that we continue to educate our "self" from "the cradle to the grave."

(4) Results we have seen achieved in the past, learned from the stories of past people in the Quran.

(5) Setting new goals to achieve future results.

Future results depend upon how we incorporate our beliefs—how we view the world—into our own self-image. According to al-Ghazzali, our firm and certain belief in the Oneness of God should lead us—as it did Prophet Muhammad (S)—to the following beliefs:

²⁰ Alchemy, p. 98.

²¹ Alchemy, p. 99.

(i) The belief that everything happens for a reason. We look for the good and positive in whatever happens.

(ii) The belief that there is no such thing as failure, only results or outcomes. If we are able to train a falcon to hunt for us, al-Ghazzali uses as an example, we can train and discipline our rational faculty to control our passions. Al-Ghazzali says that we should not expect immediate results. Change is gradual. We need to develop patience, a great virtue in his view.

(iii) The belief that we must take responsibility for whatever happens. No matter what happens, know and believe that we are in charge. The Prophet never blamed others for whatever happened. He never allowed himself to be a victim. As the Quran says: "*God does not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves.*" (Q. 13:11)

(iv) The belief that we need to learn from other people who are our greatest resource. Treat them with respect and dignity as the Prophet did.

(v) The belief that we need to challenge our profession or line of work and excel in it. Explore new ways of doing things. Increase our sense of curiosity and vitality.

(vi) The belief that there is no success without commitment. Know our outcome in the Hereafter as the Prophet knew. Develop our sensory responses so we know what we are getting and then continue to refine it until we get what we want. Study the key beliefs of the Prophet and then hold tight to them.

In al-Ghazzali's view, if we firmly believe we are among those "who submit to God's Will" (*muslim*), then with our cognition, affect and behavior as understood from the monotheistic point of view as our foundation, we can submit in everything that we say or do. What we believe to be true becomes possible when we know what we want—to be one who submits to God's will—and believe we can achieve it.

STRATEGIES

Developing a strategy is to duplicate our belief system. When we organize the way we think, the way we feel and the way we behave according to our belief system, we have developed a strategy. The ingredients of our strategy are our human experiences. Our experiences are fed from our five outer senses: seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting and touching. Our five senses motivate us to action. When we are aware of what they perceive and keep their perceptions in line with our belief system, we have developed a successful strategy.

The amounts we use of the information provided by our senses is monitored by our spiritual heart (mind). Are the images small or large,

bright or unclear, close up or far away? How we put these together, their order and sequence clarifies our strategy.

With our resource being our “self” consisting of body, spirit, soul and spiritual heart (it is our spiritual heart that centers us), we want to learn what we need to do to organize this resource. How can we have our goal and belief achieve the greatest potential? What is the most effective way to use the resource of our “self” and its subparts? The most effective strategy has always been modeling the behavior of others who have the same goal and the same belief. For the believer, this model is that of the Messenger Muhammad (S) who was the perfect human being.

Strategies he used included performing the prescribed fast as well as formal prayer, supplication and continuous recitation of the revelation. For the believer, revelation brought both a Law and a Way. Both serve as strategies of how to approach life in the manner in which the model approached life, and knowing that our model did not always do things exactly the same way.

The strategy of Quranic recitation is yet another form of discipline. One of the verses of the Quran: “*Remember Me and I will remember you,*” (Q. 2:152) makes this form of supplication a very rich traditional strategy to attain spiritual energy.

THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL: STATES (AFFECT, EMOTION)

Our belief establishes states (emotions, affect) which then result in our actions. In this relationship and all others, our state of mind is important because that determines our emotion and our emotion determines how many resources are available to us. Our emotions depend upon how we feel physically—our breathing, posture, etc.—and how we represent the world to ourselves internally. When we have cleared our spiritual heart of hypocrisy in our acts of worship, our actions are to worship God and we are at the beginning stages of the greater struggle according to al-Ghazzali.

States (affect, emotion) are held or transformed in terms of psychology through moral values that energize us. Our behavior is the result of the state we are in at the time. Our emotional state governs our behavior. Behavior is the result of how we represent the information from our senses internally as well as our muscular tension, posture, physiology.

We have the resources we need to succeed. We have to learn how to access them. We need to learn to take direct control: Once we learn to manage our states (emotions), according to al-Ghazzali, we can modify our behavior. There is a difference of how people react to the same state. The difference depends on their model.

One of the best methods which al-Ghazzali uses over and over again in the *Alchemy* is that of what is today called reframing: changing the way we evaluate what something means. If our culture teaches us that change is a failure of opportunity for learning, we need to become resourceful, to realize that nothing has power over us but the power we give it by our own conscious thoughts. The meaning of any experience depends on the frame we put around it. If we change the context or reference point, the process changes.

We can reframe by context reframing or content reframing. With context reframing, we take a bad experience and show it in another way. With content reframing, we drastically change how we see, hear, or represent a situation. We learn to change the way we represent a situation so we feel differently about it. Now we are at the level of choice instead of reaction. By learning to reframe, we change our emotions so that they empower us. We can either associate or disassociate. If we associate consciously, we learn to change the way we represent things, thereby changing our behavior. We have to aim for congruence between our spiritual heart (mind) and body.

CLARITY OF MORAL VALUES

Clarity of values gives us a sense of who we are and why we do what we do. If we have an internal conflict between our values and our strategy, we will not succeed. Values determine what really matters in life. They provide us with a basis from which to make sound judgments about what makes life worth living.

Al-Ghazzali refers to verses 23:1-10 of the Quran as an example of believers who have succeeded by incorporating Quranic values:

Surely, the ones who believe have prospered, those, they who in their formal prayers are ones who are humble; and those, they who from idle talk are ones who turn aside; and those, they who the purifying alms are ones who give; and those, they who of their private parts are ones who guard, except from their spouses or from what their right hands possess. Truly, they are ones who are irreproachable. Whoever looks for something beyond that, then those, they are the ones who are turning away. And those, they who their trusts and their compacts are ones who shepherd. And those, they who over their formal prayers are watchful. Those, they are ones who will be inheritors, those who will inherit Paradise. (Q. 23:1-11)

Al-Ghazzali then summarizes the verses to describe a person of good character:

A person of good character is he who is modest, says little, causes little trouble, speaks the truth, seeks the good, worships much, has few faults, meddles little, desires the good for all, and does good works for all. He is compassionate, dignified, measured, patient, content, grateful, sympathetic, friendly, abstinent, and not greedy. He does not use foul language, nor does he exhibit haste, nor does he harbor rancor in his heart. He is not envious. He is candid, well-spoken, and his friendship and enmity, his anger and his pleasure are for the sake of God Most High and nothing more.²²

In the *Alchemy* (as well as in the *Revival*), al-Ghazzali devotes the major part of the work to clarity of moral values by describing in great detail what he calls the Destroyers and the Deliverers. He not only describes them in each of those parts, but also offers treatment as to how to get rid of them (the Destroyers) or how to incorporate them into our personality (the Deliverers). Doing this clarifies the moral values of the one who submits to God's Will.

As a result of the performance of the acts of worship, if accompanied by Divine Grace, the one who submits to the Will of God will be receptive to the adoption of positive dispositions (the Deliverers) like temperance, courage, wisdom, and justice and be able to avoid negative dispositions (the Destroyers) like anger, fear of other than God, cowardice, lust, envy, apathy, preconsciousness (knowing that you do not know), unconsciousness (not knowing that you do not know) and overconsciousness (knowing but deceiving the self about it), but only on the condition that others benefit from the positive dispositions one has attained. This, then, makes it incumbent on the one who has submitted to the Will of God to come to know and act upon the commands that underlie the relationship of self to others.

ENERGY

The entire human organism is a complete system that makes use of energy transformed from food and air to satisfy its various natural dispositions. Perception (external and internal senses) and motivation develop, according to traditional psychology, from the animal soul. Motivation is the seat of impulses towards inclinations which are imprinted on the external or internal senses and then, through filtering into what is called the practical intellect (the mind), a response is given. Three energy sources are active in this perspective: natural (venial, *ṭabīʿī*), vital (arterial, *nafsānī*), and nervous (*haywānī*). These transformed energies are distributed throughout the body. The heart is

²² *Alchemy*, pp. 465-6.

considered to be the point of contact between the energy of the body and that of the self.

Without the necessary energy, which according to al-Ghazzali comes from spiritual practices, we reach a state of hopelessness and despair. For instance, if someone asked: "If one has been condemned to hardship, what is the benefit of the greater struggle?" Al-Ghazzali explains this attitude:

As for that which thou askest: "If one has been condemned to hardship, what is the benefit of striving?" the words are correct, and from another aspect, void. These words are correct in that they are cause of thy perdition, for the sign that a person has been condemned to hardship is that these words fall upon his soul and he makes no effort, neither sowing nor reaping. The sign that a person has been condemned to death is that when he becomes hungry, the thought occurs in his heart not to eat. He says: "What good is bread to me?" He does not extend his hand to eat and he does not eat until, by necessity, he dies. If he has been condemned to poverty, he says: "Of what use is sowing seed?" so he neither sows nor reaps. And he for whom happiness has been decreed, he has been made aware that wealth and life have been decreed for him. They have been decreed because he has cultivation, business, and consumption. Therefore, this decree is not in vain; rather it is for (certain) reasons.²³

THE THIRD FUNDAMENTAL: ACTIONS (BEHAVIOR)

Knowledge alone is not sufficient for we who accepted the trusteeship of nature and were endowed with the Divine Spirit which includes our abilities to choose, to discern, and to gain consciousness of our "self." It is through actions based on knowledge that the centered self benefits another as proof of being centered. The major pillars include ritual purity (*ṭahārah*) and ritual prayer (*ṣalāh*), ritual fast (*ṣawm*), the paying of the alms tax (*zakāh*), the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*), counseling to positive dispositions and preventing the development of negative ones (*amr bil ma'rūf wa nahy an al-munkar*) and *jihād* or struggle in the Way of God, the greater struggle of which is the inward struggle of the self (*al-jihād al-akbar*). The last two are the major concern of traditional psychology.

²³ Alchemy, p. 872.

BONDING POWER OR RAPPORT

Bonding and communicating are aspects of action—proof of the extent of transformation through attaining the goal that we had intended. The power to bond with others is an extraordinary human power. It comes in the true sense when bonding develops from the heart and not from either the intellect or the passions. It comes from a deep love for one's fellow human being and arises when we try to meet the needs of others before our own needs, much like a mother with her new born child.

Al-Ghazzali quoting from the Quran, the Prophet and the Companions mentions how important it is to eat with other people and to perform the formal obligatory prayer with other people.

COMMUNICATORS

Believers should conceivably be master communicators on all three levels—with self, with others and with the Source. How we communicate determines the quality of our lives. Through spiritual disciplines like, for example, prescribed fasting, believers are given an opportunity, a challenge. If they are able to communicate that challenge to themselves successfully, they will find the ability to change. This is not to accept prescribed fasting as only a religious duty but rather as a divine challenge, as a chance for growth instead of an experience which limits self. In this way, we will become master communicators because our very life will communicate our vision, goal and beliefs to others to help them change for the better, as well.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHERS

Al-Ghazzali discusses knowledge (cognition), states (affect) and action (behavior) in three relationships: our relationship with others, our relationship with our Creator-Guide, and our relationship with our "self."

The model for this is the *sunnah* of Muhammad (S) who said, "I was sent to complete the noble qualities of dispositions," explaining that God loves the positive dispositions and not the negative ones. Al-Ghazzali also quotes another Tradition in this regard, "By Him in whose hand is my life, no one shall enter paradise except the one who has positive dispositions." Al-Ghazzali says, "God taught [Muhammad (S)] all the fine qualities of disposition, praiseworthy paths, reports about the first and last affairs, and matters through which one achieves salvation and reward in future life and happiness and reward in the world to come."

Quoting the Traditions, al-Ghazzali shows the relationship established by the Prophet with others.

And the Messenger (S) said: "There are not two persons who love each other for the sake of God that the one more beloved by God is the one loves the other the most." And he said: "God Most High says: 'My love is a right for those who visit one another for My sake, who love each other for My sake, who are generous to each other with their wealth for My sake, and who aid each other for My sake.'" And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection God Most High will say: 'Where are those persons who loved each other for My sake so that I may keep them in My shadow on this day when there is no shade for the people in which to take refuge?'"

And he said: "There are seven persons on the Day of Resurrection who, when there will be no shade for anyone, will be in the shadow of God Most High: the just leader, the young person who began worshipping God Most High at the beginning of his youth, the man who leaves the mosque with his heart attached to the mosque until he returns to it again, two people who love each other for the sake of God Most High and who come together for that and separate for that, the person who remembers God Most High in private and whose eyes fill with tears, the man who when called by a magnificent and beautiful woman says to her: 'I fear God Most High,' and the man who gives voluntary charity with his right hand so that the left hand has no knowledge of it." And he said: "No one visits a brother for the sake of God Most High save that an angel cries out, saying: 'Be happy and blessed! Thine is the heaven of God Most High!'"

And he said: "A man was going to visit a friend. God Most High sent an angel in his path who asked: 'Where goest thou?' He replied: 'To visit such-and-such a brother.' (The angel) asked: 'Dost thou have some business with him?' He said: 'No.' (The angel) asked: 'Art thou related to him in some way?' He said: 'No.' (The angel) asked: 'Has he done something good for thee?' He answered: 'No.' (The angel) said: 'Then why art thou going to him?' He answered: 'I love him for the sake of God.' (The angel) said: 'Then, God Most High has sent me to thee to give thee the good news that God Most High loves thee because of thy love for him, and has made heaven an obligation for both of you yourselves.'" And the Messenger (S) said: "The strongest resort of faith is love and enmity for the sake of God Most High."²⁴

²⁴ Alchemy, p. 324.

Al-Ghazzali describes relationships with others ranking them in degrees.

THE FIRST DEGREE is that thou lovest someone for some reason linked with him, but that motive is religious and for the sake of God Most High, as thou likest thy teacher because he teaches thee knowledge. That friendship is of a divine nature since thine aim for (acquiring) this knowledge is the Hereafter, not rank or wealth. If the object be the world, that friendship is not of that kind. If thou love thy student so that he learn from thee and may obtain the pleasure of God Most High through learning, (thou) obtainest the spiritual reward of teaching also. This is for the sake of God Most High. But if thou lovest (him) for the sake of dignity and retinue, it will not be of that kind. If a person gives voluntary charity and likes a person on the condition that he deliver that to the poor, or he invites some poor people and likes a person who prepares a good meal, then such friendship is for the sake of God. Indeed, if one likes someone and gives him bread and clothing to provide for him the leisure to worship (God), it is friendship for the sake of God, since his motive is the peace of mind for worship.

Many religious scholars and worshippers have had friendships with the rich and powerful for this reason. Both were counted as friends for the sake of God Most High. Moreover, if one loves his own wife because she keeps him from corruption and because of the bringing forth of children who will supplicate for him, such love is for the sake of God Most High and everything thou spendest for her is a voluntary charity. Indeed, if one loves his student for two reasons: one that he serves him and the other that he gives him the peace of mind to perform his worship, that part which is for worship is counted as love for the sake of God most High and there is spiritual reward for it.

THE SECOND DEGREE is greater. It is that one love a person for the sake of God without having any expectations from him. Instead, it is by reason of obedience to God and for the love of Him that one loves the other. Moreover, because he is a servant of God and created by Him—such friendship is divine. It is greater, because this arises from the excess of one's love for God Most High, so much so that it reaches the boundaries of passionate love. Whoever is in love with someone, loves (that person's) district and neighborhood. He loves the walls of (that person's) house. Indeed, he loves the dog roaming the quarter's streets, and he likes that dog more than other (dogs). He is compelled to love the friend of his beloved, and beloved of his beloved, the people who obey the commands of his beloved, (the beloved's) servants, slaves, or

relatives: all of these he loves out of necessity, for his love spreads to whatever has a relation with his beloved. As his love increases, so it increases with the others who follow and are connected with the beloved.²⁵

*ESTABLISHING THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE SELF AND OUR CREATOR-GUIDE*

This relationship is established, according to al-Ghazzali, through the commands of worship (*ʿibādah*), which are the most fundamental means of communication between our “self” and God. They embody the same three aspects: knowledge (cognition), states (affect, process) and action (behavior). One who submits to the Will of God seeks knowledge of particular guidance. This produces a “state” (emotion) in the self which then responds with an action as al-Ghazzali explains:

Know that the object and core of all acts of worship are the remembrance of God Most High; that the buttress of Islam is obligatory formal prayer, the object of which is the remembrance of God Most High. As He said: *Surely (formal) prayer prevents lewdness and evil, and indeed the remembrance of God is greater (than all else).* (Q. 29:45)

Reading the Quran is the most meritorious of the acts of worship, for the reason that it is the word of God Most High. (Reading it) is remembering Him. All (things) in it—all cause a renewal of the remembrance of God, may He be praised and exalted. The object of fasting is the reduction of the carnal appetite so that the soul, liberated from the annoyance of the carnal appetites, may become purified and the abode of remembrance. For, when the soul is filled with carnal appetite, it is not possible to remember (Him); nor does (the remembrance) affect one. The object of the Greater Pilgrimage, which is a visit to the House of God, is the remembrance of the Lord of that House and the incitement of the longing for meeting Him.

Thus, the inner secret and the core of all of the acts of worship are remembrance. Indeed, the basis of Islam is the declaration: *There is no god but God.* This is the source of remembrance. All other acts of worship stress this remembrance. God’s remembrance of thee is the fruit of thy remembrance of Him. What fruit could be greater than this? For this He said: *So remember Me, I shall remember you.* (Q. 2:152)

²⁵ Alchemy, pp. 325-6.

This remembrance must be continuous. If it is not continuous, it should be most of the time, for salvation is tied to it. For this, He said: *And remember God much; perhaps ye will be successful.* (Q. 62:10) He says that if ye have the hope of salvation, the key to that is much remembrance, not a little, and more frequently, not less.

And for this He said: *Those who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down...* (Q. 3:191) He praised these people because they do not neglect (remembrance) standing, sitting, lying down, or in any condition. And He said: *Remember thy Lord, (O Muhammad), within thyself humbly and with awe, in a soft voice, in the morning and in the evening, and be not of the neglectful.* (Q. 7:205) He said: "Remember Him with weeping, fear, and in concealment, morning and evening, and do not neglect (this) at any time."

The Messenger (S) was asked: "What is the best of acts?" He answered: "That thou die with thy tongue moist with the remembrance of God Most High." And he said: "Should I not inform you of the best of your actions—the most acceptable to the King, may He be exalted—and your highest degrees, that which is better than giving alms of silver and gold, and better than shedding your blood in battle against enemies in defense of the faith?" They asked: "What is that, O Messenger of God?" He said: "*The remembrance of God.*" The remembrance of God Most High! And, he said: "Whomever the remembrance of me engages in the worshipful supplication of God, his gift is, in my opinion, greater and better than giving (alms) to beggars." And he said: "The rememberer of God Most High among the heedless is like a living person amongst the dead, or like a green tree amongst dead vegetation, or like the warrior for the faith who stands fighting amongst those fleeing..."²⁶ In summary, the strength of one's love for God Most High is in accordance with the strength of one's faith. The stronger one's faith, the more overwhelming one's love is..²⁷

KNOW YOUR "SELF"

The most important relationship for the purposes of traditional psychology is that of our relationship to our "self." Our "self" as we have seen, consists of body, spirit, soul and spiritual heart. We turn now to the *Alchemy's* Prolegomena (added here by al-Ghazzali, it does not appear in the *Revival*) where al-Ghazzali explores how to come to know the "self" in great detail.

²⁶ *Alchemy*, pp. 208-9.

²⁷ *Alchemy*, p. 326.

The traditional method of teaching a text is for the teacher to read it part by part with a class of students and then comment on what the text is saying. This is the method used next taking just the first subsection of Topic One of the Prolegomena, "Know Thyself" which appears in the following paragraphs in bold. The commentary and explanations that follow are enhanced with other sections of al-Ghazzali's writings in the *Alchemy* which are inset for clarity. If we were sitting in al-Ghazzali's classroom, this is the method he would be using.

COMMENTARY ON TOPIC ONE OF THE PROLEGOMENA: KNOW THYSELF

1. Know that the key to the knowledge of God, may He be honored and glorified, is knowledge of one's own self. For this it has been said: He who knows his "self" knows his Lord. And it is for this that the Creator Most High said: *We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves, so that it will become evident to them that it is the Truth.* (Q. 41:53) He said: We show them Our signs in the universe and in (their) selves so that the true nature of the Truth may become revealed to them.

Al-Ghazzali begins with the famous Tradition (*ḥadith*), "He who knows himself, knows his Lord." There is another that could be added: "Words of wisdom (knowledge) are the lost objects of the faithful; he must claim them wherever he finds them." The quest for knowledge is a religious obligation in Islam. Al-Ghazzali quotes another Tradition of the Prophet: Know that the Prophet (S) spoke thus: 'The quest for knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim.' Seeking knowledge is a religious duty incumbent upon all Muslims.²⁸

Al-Ghazzali continues to show that knowledge differs depending upon one's intentions.

All of the scholars have disputed (about the meaning of his words): "What knowledge is this (to which the Prophet referred)?" The scholastic theologians say that it is the science of scholastic theology by which the spiritual knowledge of God Most Might is obtained. The religious jurists say that it is the knowledge of religious jurisprudence by which the lawful and unlawful are distinguished. The Traditionists say that it is the study of the Traditions and the Practice (of the Prophet), which are the sources of the religious studies. The mystics say that it is the knowledge of the states of the soul, for the way of the servant (of God) to God is through his soul.

Each of these groups exalts its own knowledge. Our view is that one particular knowledge is not meant (by the Prophet's words) and that neither are all of these studies required...²⁹

Gnosis is defined as being continuously in the Divine Presence or sacred knowledge by al-Ghazzali:

²⁸ Alchemy, p. 7.

²⁹ Alchemy, p. 104.

So, from all of this, it has become known that learning is a religious duty imposed upon all Muslims. No Muslim does not stand in need of some kind of knowledge, but such (necessary) knowledge is not of one kind. The obligations upon a person vary. Indeed, they change with conditions and times. However, there is no one without some kind of a need for knowledge. It is for this that the Prophet (S) said: "There is no Muslim for whom the seeking of knowledge is not a religious duty." That is, the search for the knowledge which he needs in his affairs.³⁰

In regard to knowledge of the states of the heart, al-Ghazzali views this as the highest form of knowledge. A knower (gnostic, mystic) seeks: "...knowledge known as gnosis." Gnosis, *maʿrifat*, *ʿirfān*, a word we will meet often throughout al-Ghazzali's *Alchemy of Happiness* is knowledge of God that is actually experienced by the seeker. How does one obtain it?

Al-Ghazzali states it succinctly: "The beginning of all gnoses (*maʿrifat-hā*) is that one come to know oneself and God Most High." And then, he explains gnosis in more detail:

Know that the first station of the stations of religion is certainty and spiritual insight. Then, fear arises from spiritual insight, and from fear asceticism, patience, and repentance arise. Truth, sincerity, care in the remembrance (of God), and continuous meditation appear from fear, and from them familiarity and love arise. And this is the end of the stations. Satisfaction, commitment, and zeal; all of these follow upon love. As a consequence, the alchemy of (spiritual) happiness, after certainty and spiritual knowledge, is fear. Whatever is after that cannot be managed without it...³¹

And know that the divisions of the kinds of spiritual knowledge of faith are many:

The first is sanctification, that thou know that God, may He be honored and exalted, is pure and free of all attributes of created things and all that comes to thought and imagination. The expression of this is: "*Glory be to God!*" The second is that thou know that He is in this purity unique and He has no partner. The expression of this is: "*There is no god but God!*" The third is that thou know that everything that exists, all of it, is from Him and is His blessing. The expression of this condition is: "*Praise be to God!*" This is beyond both of the other two because both kinds of those kinds of spiritual knowledge appear beneath it. It was for this

³⁰ *Alchemy*, p. 107.

³¹ *Alchemy*, p. 763.

that the Messenger (S) said: “‘*Glory be to God!*’ is ten good deeds, “‘*There is no god but God!*’ is twenty good deeds, and ‘*Praise be to God!*’ is thirty good deeds.” Those good deeds are not the movements of the tongue with those words. Rather, those good deeds are the spiritual insights appearing in the soul that those words express. This is the meaning of the knowledge of gratitude.

As for the state of gratitude, it is the joy that appears in the soul from this spiritual knowledge. For everyone who sees a blessing from someone rejoices in that.³²

Included in the knowledge that we need for traditional psychology is knowledge of Divine Grace (the harmony, agreement, or concord of our will and action with God’s Will) and Guidance. As an exponent of traditional psychology—which has its basis in metaphysics—al-Ghazzali emphasizes the need to seek Divine Grace and Guidance in undertaking the greater struggle. It is his view that Divine Grace is always present whether we seek it or not but consciously seeking it increases the chances of success in this world and the next.³³

As al-Ghazzali points out, Divine Guidance—which operates through “nature in its mode of operation” or process—has established Signs between the Creator and our “self” as a means of communication. We (God the Creator) shall show them (human beings) Our Signs upon the horizon (universe) and within themselves (the self) until it is clear to them (human beings) that He (God) is the Real (*Haqq*).” (41:53) When we become conscious of our “self” and then freely choose to learn to read and to live by the Signs without and within, we will have submitted to God’s Will (*islām*). We will have completed the process of perfecting nature’s process or “mode of operation” within us. We will become centered and balanced, exhibiting the noble character traits, having gained experiential knowledge (gnosis) of the oneness of God (monotheism, *tawhīd*) reflected in nature and within our “self.”

Signs of God in nature—which includes all of the universe from the largest galaxy of stars and the planets to the smallest living organism on earth—are both external to us and internal. The study of the external Signs forms the subject of the various Natural Sciences the human being has developed to “understand” the Divine Creation like cosmology, astronomy, philosophy, biology, chemistry, and so forth as well as the science of revelation, gaining knowledge about the Quran where the 6000 some verses are each called a Sign (*āyah*).

The study of internal Signs is part of what is called practical philosophy (*ḥikmat-i ‘amalī*) and includes the sciences of ethics,

³² Alchemy, pp. 723-4.

³³ Alchemy, p. 841.

economics (including home economics) and politics. What was known as the study of ethics is today called traditional psychology. The goal of traditional psychology—to develop noble character traits—is to become a moral and ethical person by disciplining our free will in a process called “the greater struggle” (*jihād al-akbar*). Traditional psychology for al-Ghazzali (and all traditionalists) begins by referring to the “place” of the human being in the universe.

THE COVENANT BETWEEN SELF AND GOD

As the last creation of nature’s Creator, we human beings occupy a special place in nature because out of all of nature it is only within us that God breathes His Spirit. It is this infusion of the Divine Spirit which allows us to become conscious of “self,” an advantage no other aspect of nature has. Therefore, even though all of nature, the universe, and the cosmos are divinely created, only we have “consciousness of self.”

In the traditional perspective, this gift of consciousness was granted to our human spirit when we accepted the trust of the heavens and the earth. The Quran says: “*We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of it, and the human being carried it.*” (33:72) The acceptance of the trust includes the covenant with the Lord (*Rabb*) as the Quran says, “*And when your Lord took the seed of the children of Adam from their loins,*” and [asked], “*Am I not your Lord?*” and they bore witness, “*Yea, we do bear witness . . .*” so that they not respond on the Day of Judgment by saying, “*We were unaware of this.*” (7:172)

Through this covenant, we human beings became the trustee or representative of God on earth and accepted the vice-regency of the universe. The rules and regulations for this position are spelled out in traditional psychology. We accepted not only the outward trust of nature and the universe, but the inner trust as well—to complete and perfect our human nature. God gives it to us perfect and complete and it is the nurturing process—how we are raised and the environment in which we grow—that takes us away from our innate nature.³⁴ The goal of traditional psychology to assume noble character traits is so that upon the

³⁴ The Islamic view of human nature differs from the view of many Christians. Muslims believe that God created the human being complete and perfect and it is the nurturing process that tries to change human nature. Muslims believe that Adam and Eve forgot God’s Command and were forgiven by God for their forgetfulness and expelled from Paradise. Many Christians, on the other hand, based on the teachings of Paul (not Jesus) believe that Eve sinned and caused Adam to sin by touching the forbidden fruit. They call this original sin. Because of this original sin, all human beings born from the time of Adam to the time of Jesus lived and died with this original sin. When Jesus died on the cross, Christian theology teaches he saved the human being from that original sin.

Return to God—from whence all things came—we will return as the vice-gerent (*khalīfah*) of the outer world as well as of our inner “self.”

SEEKING DIVINE GRACE

In order to carry out the duties of the trusteeship, Divine Grace is sought. It is always available if sought as the Sign says: *God turns to those who turn to Him*. (Q. 2:160) Al-Ghazzali goes so far as to say that without Divine Grace—which is always present whether invoked or not—there is no conscious communication between the Creator and the trustee. In other words, without consciousness of self, communication of the regulations of the trust remains indirect and preconsciously or even, perhaps, unconsciously. Al-Ghazzali defines Divine Grace as “the harmony, agreement, or concord of our will and action with God’s Will.”³⁵ It appears as a Sign, “*That is the Grace of God, a free gift which He gives to Whom He Wills,*” (Q. 5:54)³⁶ and consists of four stages: guidance from God (*hidāyah*), sound judgment (*rushd*), confirmation (*tasdīd*), and support (*taʿyīd*). Guidance from God is of two types: universal guidance through nature (*takwīn* or *khalq*) and particular guidance through revelation (*tashrīʿ* or *khulq*).

The verse or Sign of the Quran, “[God] gave unto everything its nature and further gave it guidance,” (Q. 20:50) according to the traditional perspective, indicates God as the Creator and the Guide of all nature.

The first kind of guidance is *takwīnī* or primordial, universal guidance which all of nature receives, human or otherwise, as part of their *fiṭrat* or innate nature or natural disposition. This universal guidance regulates whatever is created in nature through a natural, unreflective process, to implementing God’s Will. Al-Ghazzali expands on this type of guidance by saying, “He guides the young bird to pick up seeds from the time of its hatching; He guides the bee to build its house in a hexagonal form . . .”³⁷

Our human nature in the traditional perspective holds within itself all that came before it in creation, not in material terms, but in terms of “nature in its mode of operation,” which is part of universal guidance. Mineral, plant, animal, and human “souls” each contribute to a part of the development and perfection of “nature’s mode of operation.” Minerals contribute preservation of the forms of the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water and their properties of cold and dry, hot and wet, hot and dry, and cold and wet, respectively. The plant soul

³⁵ Ihya, IV, 2:2255. Al-Ghazzali defines Divine Grace as “the harmony, agreement, or concord of our will and action with God’s Will.”

³⁶ See also 3:73, 57:29, 3:272, 3:174, 48:8

³⁷ Alchemy, p. 856.

contributes the ability to assimilate food, to grow, and to reproduce and the animal soul contributes perception and motivation.

At the time of the conception of the human body, it was completed with what is known as the infusion of the Divine Spirit (Q. 15:29) "*I breathed into him of My Spirit.*" Out of this union of body and "spirit" or "breath" was born the "soul" which inclines downwards towards the body and the spiritual heart which inclines upwards towards the infused spirit or breath. These four aspects—body, spirit (or breath), soul and spiritual heart make up the human "self." As the last offspring of creation, we received the gift of consciousness as part of our natural disposition, a gift that we share only with the Creator because of the covenant we made with God and the acceptance of the trusteeship or vice-regency. This, then, is the world of creation guided by universal guidance.

The second type of guidance refers to guidance acquired through God's commands. The world of command is guided by the particular guidance of revelation. As it is rational in orientation, it is our special guidance alone as human beings. If accepted as guidance in the perspective of "submission to the Will of God" (*islām*), particular guidance becomes yet another gift to one who actually does "submit to the Will of God" (*muslim*). It is a particular kind of guidance, in a sense, because it speaks to human consciousness. It is to elucidate this kind of guidance that God sends Prophets and the Divine Law as reinforcement against the forgetful and negligent human beings declaring on the Day of Judgment, "*We were unaware of this.*" (Q. 7:173)

Guidance acquired through revelation as a stage of Divine Grace or Assistance is considered to be a free gift from God because the giving was not obligatory on His part. However, al-Ghazzali makes an important distinction here. God's communication through revelation, by which we can acquire guidance, helps us know the positive traits of our divinely bestowed natural disposition, but does not compel us to actualize them through our actions or practices. We are free to make the choice to follow the world of command—particular guidance through revelation (*tashrīʿ* or *khulq*)—or not to do so. If we do not choose to be guided by particular guidance that is our choice. However, we will still be guided by universal (*takwīnī* or *khalq*) guidance just as the rest of nature is. We are compelled by universal guidance while we have free will in regard to choose or not choose particular guidance.

While we do not want to digress from our main point, there may be a need to further explain universal guidance. According to traditional psychology, the human being was born with a body infused with God's Spirit. These two, when joined, brought the soul into being. The body was created out of water and earth (cold and wet, cold and dry) while the spirit was created out of air and fire or light (hot and wet, hot and dry).

The soul contains all four properties—water, earth, air and fire—and their properties of cold, hot, wet and dry.

These properties or qualities join in various proportions to create the mineral soul which preserves them. Out of that grows the plant soul which gives us the ability to digest and assimilate food, to grow and to reproduce. Out of the mineral and plant souls comes the animal soul, which gives us perception and motivation.

All of these abilities —the ability to grow, to reproduce, etc.— belong to the world of creation and fall under universal guidance. They involve involuntary processes which do not require consciousness to function. They are natural processes.

However, as human beings who have consciousness, if we rely solely on universal guidance, we will not succeed in “submitting to the Will of God” (*islām*) and completing the perfection of nature in its mode of operation because without particular guidance, there is the possibility that we will not be able to sufficiently strengthen our free will to oppose the satanic forces (ego) within us. Divine Grace, as Guidance from God, strengthens our will power so that we gain greater conformity to God’s Will. Without Divine Grace, we make choices whereby our mineral, plant, and animal nature are strengthened as opposed to our free will being guided to follow the advice of reason. In other words, without the guidance of the Prophets and the Divine Law—which are part of revelation—we will live by universal guidance alone, possibly never achieving our full potential and possibly never completing the perfection of nature in its mode of operation which God so Willed when He infused His Spirit into us.

Particular guidance (*tashrīʿ*, *khulq*) enhances our natural disposition of conscience and our power of discernment to know the difference between good and bad, right and wrong, or positive virtues and negative vices. It also helps us regulate the states of our “self” at every level of change and transformation towards completing the perfection of nature’s process at its highest level. Al-Ghazzali refers to the Signs, “*But to those who follow guidance (tashrīʿ), He increases their guidance and bestows on them piety.*” (Q. 47:17) Say: *God’s guidance is the guidance* (Q. 6:71) *Whenever God wills to guide a human being, He enlarges his breast for surrender (to Him) (islām).* (Q. 6:125)

In addition to Guidance from God in both its universal and particular forms, Divine Grace contains three other previously alluded to stages—sound judgment, confirmation and support—to all people in proportion to their seeking Divine Grace. The Sign, “*And We verily gave Abraham of old sound judgment and were aware of him,*” (Q. 21:51) confirms the second stage of Divine Grace—sound judgment—which is present when we sense God is aware of us. The Sign that we have received confirmation of Divine Grace is when we are aware that our

will and what we intend have resulted in an action that is directed to God. This is the third stage referred to by al-Ghazzali as confirmation (*tasdid*). The final stage of Divine Grace is support (*ta'yid*) which is referred to by the Sign, "...when I supported you with the Spirit." (5:110) The Sign that we have received support of Divine Grace is when we become aware that we have developed greater insight.

Al-Ghazzali elaborates on Divine Grace:

There is no blessing without its divine grace. The meaning of divine grace is the setting up of a concordance between the decree of God Most High and the desire of the servant of God. It is both in evil and in good. However, the term has customarily come to refer to the joining of the desire of the servant of God and the (divine) decree in which lies the servant's well-being. This is fulfilled with four things:

THE FIRST IS GUIDANCE of which no one is not in need, for if a person is seeking the happiness of the Hereafter and if he does not know the way, but knows the wrong way, what is the profit? Therefore, the creation of things without guidance is not enough. For this, God Most High put (us) under an obligation for both, saying: [(Moses) said: *Our Lord*] *is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright;* (Q. 20:50) and He said: (God) *is He Who measures, then guides.* (Q. 87:3) And know that there are three degrees of guidance:

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is that one distinguish between good and evil. He has given this to all rational beings: some (distinctions are made) by the faculty of the reason and some by the words of the prophets, by that which He said: *And guide him to the parting of the mountain ways?* (Q. 90:10) He desired to show the way of good and evil to (the Messenger). And by that which He said: *(The Thamud) preferred blindness to the guidance,* (Q. 41:17) He meant that whoever is deprived of this guidance, either by reason of envy or pride, or because of worldly affairs, does not heed the prophets or the religious scholars. If (that were) not so, no rational person would be incapable of this.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the special guidance that appears little by little between religious conduct and striving, and opens the way to the underlying purpose. This is the fruit of striving. As He said: *As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths.* (Q. 79:69) He said that when one strives, We Ourselves shall guide him to the way. He did not say: "We Ourselves shall guide (him) to Us." And that which He said is also this: *And as for those who walk aright, He adds to their guidance...* (Q. 41:17)

THE THIRD DEGREE is the guidance reserved for the select. This light appears in the world of prophethood and

sainthood. This guidance is to God Most High, not to the way of God. This is in a manner for which the intellect does not have the strength, for it comes of itself to (him). That which He said: *Say: Lo! The guidance of God is the Guidance!* (Q. 6:71) means that it is absolute guidance (*par excellence*). He called it "Revival" and said: *Is he who is dead and We have raised him unto life and set for him a light wherein he walks among men as him whose similitude is in utter darkness?* (Q. 6:122)

As for rectitude, it is that the impulse to travel the way with guidance appear in one. As He said: *And We gave Abraham his rectitude.* (Q. 21:51) A child who has reached puberty is not called rightly guided if he knows how property is preserved and does not do so, even though he has received guidance.

As for finding guidance, it is that the motion of one's limbs move with ease from the aspect of that which is right so that one may quickly attain his goal. So, the fruit of guidance is in spiritual knowledge, the fruit of rectitude is motive and desire, and the fruit of finding guidance is in the power and tools of movement.

As for support, it is composed of the help of the angels from the unseen internally with the sharpness of perception, and externally with the power of strength and movement. As He said: *When I strengthened thee (Mary) with the Holy Spirit.* (Q. 5:110) Chastity is close to this. That is that an impediment appear inside one blocking the way to sin and the darkness of the way, but one does not fully understand where the impediment comes from. As He said: *And she certainly desired him, and he (Joseph) would have desired her if it had not been that he saw proof of his Lord.* (Q. 12:24)

These are the blessings of the world that are the provision for the Hereafter, and these have need of other causes, and these causes have need of other causes, until at the end (of the sequence) one reaches the Guide of the Perplexed and the Lord of Lords, Who is the Causer of Causes. A discussion of all the links in the chain of causes would be lengthy; let what we have said here suffice."³⁸

Based on al-Ghazzali's description, the Guidance we receive through sound judgment, confirmation and support will reflect in our intentions, which consist of desire, will power and knowledge. We use our will power to motivate us and make our intentions known to ourself in establishing our relationship with God, with the creation and with our

³⁸ Alchemy, pp. 738-9.

“self.” We do this, according to al-Ghazzali, through three stages: knowledge (cognition), states (affect), and acts (behavior).

Our cognition based in the certain belief in the Oneness of God and prophethood of Muhammad (S) results in our strategies reflecting that belief system. Our affect based in noble character traits exhibited in the Most Beautiful Names that formed the character of Prophet Muhammad (S) energize our total “self” (body, spirit or breath, soul and spiritual heart). This leads to healing and centering—to the extent of God’s Will and our motivation—in the complete and perfect human nature God gave us, holding fast to our covenant and maintaining our trusteeship of nature. Our behavior then becomes habituated to bonding with our Creator, the universe, friends, family and other human beings in such a way that we communicate with them through the most beautiful character by holding our passions—lust and anger—in check by our sense of reason while maintaining our reason to be balanced and centered in fairness and justice. This is how we exhibit our love of God which, according to al-Ghazzali, is the highest state we human beings can attain.

Adding to our various kinds of knowledge, in addition to knowledge about Divine Guidance and Grace, is the knowledge of intention. Al-Ghazzali explains:

Intention is composed of all three: of desire, of power, and of knowledge. Desire is what prompts it and sets it to work. That is also called motive, purpose, and intention. All three have one meaning.³⁹

This is knowledge about how important making our intention known is according to traditional psychology because it is through our intentions that we will be judged in the Hereafter. We should also know as we are trying to get to know our “self” that the best intention we can have is to do whatever we do for God’s sake alone as al-Ghazzali points out:

Now that thou hast learned that the meaning of intention is motivation for action, know that there is the person whose motivation for devotion is the fear of hell. There is the person whose motivation is the blessings of Paradise. Whoever acts for the sake of Paradise is the slave of his belly and his genitalia and is killing himself so that he will fall in a place where he will satisfy his belly and his genitalia. And he who acts out of fear of hell is like the bad slave who does not work except out of fear of his master. Both of these have nothing to do with God Most High. On the contrary, the admirable servant of God is he who does what he does for the

³⁹ *Alchemy*, p. 801.

sake of God Most High, not in the hope of Paradise, or in the fear of hell. He is like the person who looks upon his beloved for the sake of the beloved, not because his beloved gives him silver and gold; for whoever looks for the sake of silver and gold, his beloved is silver and gold. Consequently, whoever's beloved and adored one is not the beauty and majesty of the Divine Presence cannot form such an intention.⁴⁰

2. In a word, there is nothing closer to you than you. If you do not know yourself, how can you know anything else? Indeed, if you say you know your "self," you are in grievous error! You know nothing more about your "self" than your head, face, hands, feet, flesh, and external skin! All you know about your insides is that when you are hungry you must eat; when you anger, you fight; when lust or (sexual) appetite overcomes you, you seek to copulate. In this, you are the equal of the beasts of burden!

Our "self" consists of body, spirit, soul and spiritual heart as has been previously described. When al-Ghazzali refers to soul in the *Alchemy*, he is invariably referring to the animal soul (*nafs al-ammārah*). What is this animal soul and what purpose does it have?

It is important here to know the animal soul in great detail, as it is the animal soul that is our enemy in our greater struggle.

The word "soul" can be confusing in traditional psychology because necessary descriptions are often not given in traditional texts so the lines tend to blur particularly between the concepts of soul, spirit and

⁴⁰ *Alchemy*, pp. 813-14. What al-Ghazzali is saying in this passage is: {that you know the intention" (reason, motivation, purpose) for not doing something that you are able to do but upon reflection do not do so it appears to be out of your control. Intention is a desire or impulse that causes one to act. You act according to your will power. "If you desire to, you do it; and if you do not desire to, you do not do it." However, when the desire is not in your control (because of your belief system), you may still desire something or not desire something. Moreover, a desire may arise or not arise. The cause of a desire not arising—you are not motivated to do it—is when an erroneous belief system prevents you from doing it. Your motivation or intention is tied to something in this world or the next preventing you from desiring it. A person who does not know these mysteries defers many acts of devotion because there is no motivation to do them.

An example of what al-Ghazzali is referring to here would be: it is the time for formal obligatory prayer. A person believes that God will forgive them his sins or that there is no Hereafter or that missing an obligatory formal prayer is not anything to concern himself about because he knows many Muslims who do not pray, etc. All of these rationalizations, according to al-Ghazzali, form an erroneous belief system which then does not create the desire in a person to use their power to act and perform the formal obligatory prayer. As a result of not knowing the mysteries of worship one misses many acts of devotion. Their rationalizations prevent their being motivated to perform them.

heart. Here we will try to clarify what traditionist mean by soul in general and animal soul in particular.

We have previously referred to the mineral and plant souls as well as the animal soul. In addition, the Quran refers to the blaming soul and the soul at peace among others. According to al-Ghazzali, only the animal soul when seen within the human being plays a negative role in trying to prevent us from succeeding in the greater struggle. The other aspects—the blaming soul, the soul at peace, etc.—are positive aspects of the soul that are often referred to as the heart and the spirit respectively.

Here we will only be describing the animal soul.

The animal soul or “passions” in the traditional perspective consists of two major systems: affective (lust, appetite, preserve the species, attraction to pleasure) and behavioral (anger, preserve the individual, avoidance of harm/pain). We have met these two concepts previously as states (affect, emotion or A) and acts (behavior or B).

Al-Ghazzali explains the importance of the opposing cold-hot qualities between these two aspects of the animal soul:

And the reason for anything's not coming into existence in perfection and beauty is that there is no place for its acceptance because there is some attribute working in opposition to it. It may be that in that opposition there is a purpose for some other work: for it is not possible for fire to accept the coolness and delicacy of water, because heat does not accept cold, as it is its opposite. Too, its heat is the point (of its existence). Eliminating (that quality) from it would also be a deficiency. In fact, the moisture from which He created the fly He created because the fly is more perfect than that moisture. The moisture is (potentially) capable of that perfection. (The realization of that potential) was not held back from it, for such a restriction would be stinting. (The fly) is more perfect because in it are life, power, sensation, movement, and strange shapes and organs that are not in that moisture.⁴¹

THE EMOTIONAL OR AFFECTIVE SYSTEM

The affective/emotive or “attraction to pleasure” system is the most basic aspect of the animal soul and its function is to preserve the human species. This aspect of the animal soul is referred to as *shahwat* (concupiscence) by al-Ghazzali. It has been translated as carnal desires, lust (appetites) or our bestial qualities. Lust is born of water and earth (cold and wet and cold and dry respectively) and has a downward

⁴¹ Alchemy, p. 727.

tendency. It is that part of our "self" that seeks, desires, and is attracted to pleasure.

THE BEHAVIORAL SYSTEM

The second system to be generated as part of the animal soul, is the behavioral or "avoidance of pain" system to preserve us as an individual. Al-Ghazzali refers to this as *ghadhab*, (irascible) anger, or our predatory qualities. Anger is born of fire and air and has an upward inclination. The behavioral system is considered to be in a preconscious state in the sense that it is capable of learning discipline and modifying itself if regulated by a balanced cognitive system which will be discussed below.

THE AFFECTIVE/EMOTIVE AND BEHAVIORAL SYSTEMS (THE ANIMAL SOUL)

Al-Ghazzali compares the animal soul (affect-behavior) to a stubborn animal and how to discipline it.

The similitude of this animal soul is the stubborn beast of burden which we satisfy by first withholding its fodder until it is tamed. Another is that we remove the fodder from before it so that it does not see it. Another is that we give it that amount which calms it down. Each of these three treatments is the same for the appetite. It is the weakening of the appetite.⁴²

Al-Ghazzali gives another example of the animal soul.

The similitude of anger is that of a hunting dog, the similitude of the carnal appetite is that of a horse, and the similitude of reason is that of a rider. A horse is sometimes refractory and sometimes obedient and trained. A dog is sometimes taught and sometimes it reverts to its own nature. Until the one is taught and the other trained, there is no hope for the rider's obtaining any game. Indeed, there is the fear that he will be killed, that the dog may attack him, or that the horse may throw him to the ground.⁴³

The affective-behavioral systems or "the passions" are the irrational systems within our "self." They can corrupt our rational system and seduce our free will. They work through both our internal sense of

⁴² Alchemy, p. 823.

⁴³ Alchemy, p. 452

imagination and through our impulses to move our “self” to attracting pleasure (lust) or avoiding harm (anger).

Our abilities to be motivated and to perceive arise out of our animal soul. When we desire something, our will power is motivated to obtain it. When we desire to escape from a dangerous situation, that desire motivates our will power to flee. So, while al-Ghazzali describes states (affect, attraction to pleasure, emotion lust) as separate from acts (behavior, avoidance of pain, anger) as the second and third of his fundamentals of traditional psychology, they are actually one thing—the animal soul. There is a continuous tension between them on the one hand trying to obtain pleasure while on the other trying to avoid harm.

According to traditional psychology, the affective or emotional system is programmed to instinctively attract love and pleasure while the behavioral system is programmed to avoid harm and pain. The affective system receives its energies from the organ of the liver through the veins to attract to pleasure. It is the most basic drive of human nature. The behavioral system, on the other hand, receives its energies from that of the heart through the arteries. That is, our tendencies to be attracted to pleasure pass through our veins while our tendencies to avoid pain pass through our arteries. The two together, therefore, act to “attract pleasure” and “avoid pain or harm.”

Traditionalists believe that our natural state is one of pleasure, whether it be in attracting pleasures or in protecting the pleasure system through the avoiding of harm/pain (preserving the individual). If the affective dominates, we are attracted to all sorts of pleasures. If the behavioral system dominates, we are ruled by the urge for power and ambition. This becomes clear in the words of al-Ghazzali:

Know that however much the appetite is stronger, the spiritual reward for opposing it is that much greater. There is no appetite stronger than this, but the desideratum of this appetite is unseemly. Most of those who do not give rein to this appetite are either unable to, or do not do so out of shame and the fear of disclosure and the ruin of their reputations. There is no spiritual reward for those who abstain for these reasons, for their obedience is motivated by the world, not by the Religious Law. And, an inability to commit sins is a blessing, for one will indeed not fall liable to punishment and sin, whatever the reason for one's abstinence. However, if a person masters this forbidden thing without any obstacle, and he abstains for the sake of God, his spiritual reward is great. He is one of the seven persons who shall be under the shade of the Throne of God Most High on the Day of Resurrection. His degree will be the degree of Joseph (A) in that meaning.

Joseph (A) was the imam and leader in negotiating this dangerous passage.⁴⁴

These two systems cooperate in such a way that the actions of the behavioral system unite with or replace those of affect whenever we are in difficulty. When we sense an object to be desirable, affection responds, and from this, in turn, we are motivated because of our desire to possess it. If the object can easily be procured, the affective/attraction to pleasure system supplies sufficient energy—i.e. we are hungry, have food and eat. However, if any obstacles get in the way—i.e., we have no food—the behavioral/avoidance of pain system yields hope in support of the affective system by our action of going to the store to get food, enabling us to strive with greater effort to get the pleasure that we want. Our “attraction to pleasure” power may deprive us of contentment until the obstacle has been removed and our desire satisfied (i.e. we have satisfied our hunger). However, whenever there is an insurmountable problem—i.e. we have no money to buy food—our affective system is overwhelmed with loss of hope so that we do not spend energy in vain.

The same is true with regard to avoidance of pain. Courage leads us to combat that which oppresses us—i.e. we go to war—but fear prevents our persisting against great odds—we submit when overwhelmed. Whenever difficulty afflicts us, our behavioral system supports our emotions or affective system.

The result is far more dangerous to our balance than when our emotional or our behavioral systems each act alone. The behavioral system may induce us to pursue that which is contrary to the affective system. It may risk our very life to seek revenge or to be envious. Thus the very means which nature—in its mode of operation—provided to insure the survival of the individual may prove its undoing. The two systems, acting together, can fan into a flame that destroys rationality.

The affective-behavioral systems or animal soul may proceed from a mild state to an extreme one. Desire of a future good may kindle either hope (a mild state) or despair (an extreme state). The resentment of a future event stirs either fear (an extreme state) or courage (a moderate state depending upon the circumstances). The perception of a present evil, which at first caused grief, may incite anger. The progress between emotion and behavior is frequently from grief to anger.

If these two systems dominate, they blind our sense of understanding. They can cause our sense of reason to judge whatever promotes their needs as good and agreeable to reason. The domination of our animal soul (emotion-behavior) can be so strong that our energies are

⁴⁴ Alchemy, p. 492.

exhausted and their perception, then, prevents us from returning to a normal state.

THE COGNITIVE SYSTEM

Animals also have the animal soul and if we as human beings do not proceed beyond this, we would just be another of the animal species according to al-Ghazzali. We would be either bestial (attraction to pleasure, appetite or lust) or predatory (avoidance of pain, anger). The difference lies in the third system within us—the cognitive system. Al-Ghazzali refers to the positive aspect of cognition, thinking or gaining knowledge as angelic and the negative as satanic. Our cognitive system is the center where our knowledge is stored and out of which our actions should initiate after reflection.

Al-Ghazzali tells us that the animal soul was created earlier than our spiritual heart and took over the breast when we were children.

First, carnal appetite, which is the tool of Satan, was put in control over him. That intelligence which is the enemy of passion and is the light of the essence of the angels was created after the establishment of the carnal appetite (in him) and its seizing the fortress of the breast in conquest. The self became accustomed to and familiar with it.⁴⁵

Other characteristics of affective or emotional-behavioral response to a situation include contradiction and contrariety. Contradiction and contrariety have to do with our ability to reason. When we least expect it, the two systems may completely undermine our rationality. While we are engaged in thought, an emotion or motion so strong may creep into us that we are carried beyond all control. We have to respond even if it means losing our life. The desires of these systems (the animal soul) keep neither order nor measure because of the inability of the animal soul to reflect.

The cognitive system is actualized through nurture. Its final form depends upon the quality and quantity of the environment in which we grow and develop. If our nurturing process is a psychically healthy one, we will actualize our natural disposition for discerning between positive and negative dispositions, good and bad, right and wrong, possible and impossible. This is done through particular guidance in the form of Divine Grace of which we may or may not be aware.

If our nurturing process has been a psychically unhealthy one—in the sense that we were brought up without being taught how to reason—we will lead our “self” astray. In terms of free will actions, an

⁴⁵ *Alchemy*, p. 688.

underdevelopment of reason is called a state of preconsciousness, that is, not being present in consciousness, but capable of being "reminded" of it without encountering any resistance or repression, "knowing that you do not know." An undevelopment of reason, a negative trait which is known as the most fatal kind in terms of morality, is unconsciousness. Alienated from self-awareness, unconscious impulses are naturally disposed to be stronger to preserve the human race and the individual when there is no possibility of consciousness (exercise of reason). It is not knowing and not knowing that we do not know. When there is an overdevelopment of reason, hypocrisy, cleverness and identity disturbances take over the self.

Al-Ghazzali frequently warns of the dangers of hypocrisy:

Another thing is that one must watch one's soul, as the appetite of hypocrisy commonly lies hidden inside one. On the pretext of others' following his example, he makes (his acts of devotion) public until he is ruined. This weak one is like the person who does not know how to swim and is about to drown. He seizes the hand of another and both perish.⁴⁶

If guidance comes at a later life stage, we will then make the attempt to implement God's Will and perfect our God-given nature. Al-Ghazzali describes the gradual process to restoring the healthy psychic self:

...he is made habituated to opposing the appetite little by little until he becomes bold, for when a person desires to become strong, he must test his strength and perform acts of strength. Little by little and bit by bit, he goes farther. A person who wants to wrestle with a strong man must first wrestle with persons who are weaker and test his strength with them to increase (his own) strength. It is for this that the strength of people who do hard work is greater. The treatment for obtaining patience in all affairs is this.⁴⁷

It is then that we will have attained what al-Ghazzali's refers to as the angelic state. This is a process known as "restoration of psychic health." If not, we will live out our life in a state of unconsciousness, unaware of our true potential, never completing the perfection of nature in its mode of operation.

The animal soul becomes accustomed to comfort and ease al-Ghazzali tells us:

⁴⁶ Alchemy, p. 626.

⁴⁷ Alchemy, p. 720.

Another reason is that when the self becomes accustomed to comfort and ease, it acquires a love for the permitted things of the world and the soul becomes attached to them, turning the world into its heaven. Death becomes difficult. Insolence and heedlessness appear in one's soul. When one engages in the remembrance (of God) and secret conversation (with God), one finds no pleasure in it. Since lawful passions keep him from this, he becomes discomfited and troubled. The world becomes hateful to him and an eagerness for the comfort of the Hereafter appears in (his soul). In a state of sorrow and broken-heartedness, a single glorification will have the effect upon his soul that hundreds (of glorifications) did not have when he was in a state of joy and ease.⁴⁸

As a result, the spiritual heart has to be “weaned” from reliance upon the animal soul al-Ghazzali says:

The similitude of the animal soul is the falcon that is trained by putting it into a chamber and covering its eyes so as to restrain from all that was in it of its falcon-ness. Then, gradually, it will be given meat so that it may become familiar with the falconer and obedient to him. In the same way, the heart does not find intimacy with God Most High so long as you do not wean it from all habits and do not close off the eyes, tongue, and ears (to such things), and you do not discipline it with seclusion, hunger, silence, and sleeplessness. In the beginning, this will be difficult for it—just as when a child is weaned from milk. Afterwards, (the child) will become such that if one tries to give him milk by force, he will not be able to drink it.⁴⁹

Bearing hunger by choice—not by necessity—according to al-Ghazzali is one of the best ways to learn to control the animal soul.

Know that the object of hunger is the breaking of the self, bringing it under control, and correcting it. When it is upright, these measures are not necessary. It is for this reason that while the spiritual guide commands all of this for the disciple, he himself does not do it. The object is not pain and hunger. Rather, the object is that one eat that amount which neither makes his stomach heavy nor leaves the feeling of hunger. Both of these distract one from worship. The perfection in this lies in partaking of the attributes of the angels: they experience neither the pain of hunger nor the

⁴⁸ Alchemy, p. 464.

⁴⁹ Alchemy, p. 464.

heaviness of repletion with food. However, the self does not obtain this balance except by applying force to it in the beginning.⁵⁰

If we succeed in becoming conscious and aware of the greater struggle, we will search for balance and equilibrium in the three systems of affect (emotion, lust, attraction to pleasure), behavior (anger, avoidance of pain), and reason according to al-Ghazzali.

Now thou must learn that nothing is pleasant or unpleasant to thee so long as thou art first not aware of it. Being aware of things is the charge of the senses and the intellect. The senses are five, and for each one of these there is a pleasure, and because of that pleasure, one likes it; that is, (thy) nature inclines to it. The sensory pleasure of the eye is in beautiful forms and in greenery, flowing water, and the like. It necessarily loves them. The pleasure of the ears is in beautiful and rhythmic voices (and sounds). The pleasure of the nose is in sweet scents. The pleasure of the taste is in foods. The pleasure of touch is in soft touches. All of these are love; that is, (thy) nature has an inclination towards them, and animals have all of these, too.

The sixth sense is something in the soul that is called "reason," called "vision," called "light, or by whatever term thou wishest to utter. It is that which distinguishes a human being from beasts. It also has perceptions which are pleasant to it and which are dear to it, just as other pleasures are agreeable to the senses and dear to the senses. About this the Messenger (S) said: "Three things of the world have been made my friend: women, sweet scents, and my delight in formal prayer. He placed the highest degree on formal prayer. Whoever is bestial is unaware of the soul and knows naught but the senses. He will never believe that formal prayer is pleasing and that it may be loved. A person who is dominated by his intellect, and is more distant from the attributes of the beasts, prefers the observation with the inner eye of the beauty of the Divine Presence, the wonders of His handiwork, the perfection and majesty of His Essence and Attributes over the observations with the outer eye of fine forms and greenery and flowing water. Indeed, in his view, all of these become lowly after the beauty of the Divine presence has been revealed to him."⁵¹

⁵⁰ Alchemy, p. 488.

⁵¹ Alchemy, pp. 899-900.

3. Therefore, you must seek out the truth about yourself: What sort of a thing are you? Where did you come from? Where are you going? Why have you come to this stopping place? For what purpose were you created? What is your happiness and in what does it lie? What is your misery and in what does that lie?

What sort of a thing are you? al-Ghazzali asks. Throughout the *Alchemy*, he cautions about being arrogant.

The point of this is that thou shouldst not call thyself one of the chosen of the Divine Presence so that thou measure everything according to thyself and thou say about that in which there is no benefit (for thee): "Why was this created? There is no purpose in it!" When thou hast understood that the ant was not created for thee, know that the moon, the sun, the stars, the heavens, and the angels, all of these also were not created for thee, even though thou hast some benefit from them; just as the fly was not created for thee, even though thou have some benefit from it. For, it has been chosen to eat all that is unpleasant to thee and would putrefy, in order to lessen the unpleasant stench. The butcher was not created for the fly, even though there is a benefit from him for the fly. Thy supposition that the sun rises for thy sake every day is like the supposition of the fly that imagines that the butcher goes to his shop every day for its sake so that it will be able to eat its fill of blood and unpleasantnesses. Just as a butcher himself turns to other work so that he does not remember the fly, even though the leavings of his work is the life and sustenance of the fly, the sun is turned to the service of the Divine Presence in its circumambulations and movements and does not remember thee, even though the leavings of its light enable thine eyes to see and the earth is tempered by the leavings of its temperament so that the plants which are thy food may grow. Therefore, there is for us in the purpose of creation that which has no connection with thee...⁵²

We are in one sense a series of powers or abilities as al-Ghazzali describes us:

Know that powers have been created in the human being: each one created for a purpose and in consistency with his nature. Its pleasure is consistent with his nature, just as the power of anger has been created for dominance and revenge and one's pleasure is in (doing) that. The power of the carnal appetite has been created for the obtaining of nourishment and

⁵² *Alchemy*, pp. 728-9.

one's pleasure is in (doing) that. Make an analogy of the faculties of hearing, sight, etc., in the same manner: each one has a pleasure and these pleasures are different. The pleasure of sexual intercourse is different from the pleasure of giving rein to one's anger. There are also differences in strength; some are stronger, as the pleasure of the eye from a fine image is more dominant than the pleasure of the nose in pleasant scents. A power has also been created in the human soul that is called "intelligence" and "illumination." It was created for the knowledge and spiritual insights that do not enter the imagination or the senses, and that is one's nature, too. One's pleasure in that is that by it one knows that this world has been created and it requires a wise and All-Powerful Planner Who always was. In the same way, one learns the attributes of the Maker and His wisdom in (His) creation.⁵³

Where did you come from?

OUR BODY CREATED FROM THE ELEMENTS

The elements, in the traditional perspective, develop in the atmosphere between the moon and the earth. Once on earth, they are preserved in the mineral "soul" or nature in its mode of operation as the Will of God. The elements are earth, air, fire, and water. Earth is dry and cold, water is cold and moist, air is hot and moist, and fire is hot and dry. Earth is the opposite of air and water is the opposite of fire. Union is possible because water acts as an intermediary between earth and air and air acts as an intermediary between water and fire.

The elements possess the natural disposition to ascend, descend, and to move in a circular direction. Each element is joined by one of its qualities to that which is below it and above it—water to earth below it by coldness and water to air above by moisture; air to water below it by moisture and to fire above it by heat; fire to air below it by heat and to earth, towards which it inclines in a circular motion, by dryness; earth to water above it by coldness and to fire, which declines towards it, by dryness. The elements are continually produced one from the other and their energy is never lost. The movement of the elements produces the humors within which, in turn, one's natural temperament is determined.

Two other functions these qualities have are those of being active or passive. Heat and cold are active while moisture and dryness are passive. Heat and cold are considered active because sometimes they draw on moisture and sometimes on dryness. A correspondence also exists between fire and understanding, air and reason, water and imagination and earth and the external senses where the four qualities are

⁵³ Alchemy, p. 908.

again repeated: fire is likened to sight, air to hearing, water to taste and smell and earth to feeling.

Animals and we human beings inherit the natural dispositions of the mineral and plant soul as nature in its mode of operation and two special natural dispositions of their own, namely, voluntary motivation and perception by organs.

Al-Ghazzali recommends that we meditate upon our self.

So, meditate upon thyself at first as to whence (thou camest). At first, He created thee from a droplet of fluid, and He made the first residence for that droplet the loins of thy father and the breast of thy mother. He made earth of thy mother's womb and He made a seed from thy father's spine. After that, He made the seed of thy creation. Then He appointed passion to the male and female so that the seed would be sown in the earth. Then, He made the menstrual blood irrigate that seed and created thee from a drop of semen and menstrual blood. First, some blood congeals, then it becomes flesh, that which is called the fetus. Then, He breathed life into it. Then, from that simple blood and liquid, He caused a multitude of things to appear in thee such as skin, flesh, veins, sinews, and bones. Then, from all of these, He gave form to thy limbs. He created a round head, two long arms and long legs and at the end of each, (limb) five branches. Then, on the exterior, He created eyes, ears, a mouth, a nose, a tongue and the other organs; and inside thee, the stomach, the kidneys, the liver, the spleen, the gall bladder, the bladder, and the plentiful intestines. Each one has its own shape and its own attribute, and has a different size. He divided each of these into several parts. Each finger has three joints, and each member is composed of flesh, skin, veins, fat, and bones. He created thine eyes—not larger in size than a walnut—in seven layers, each layer possessing a special quality. If one of them fails, the world becomes dark for thee. If we were to expound on the marvels of the eye alone, many pages would be blackened (with ink).

Then, look at thine own skeleton and how He created a hard and firm solid from a delicate and thin liquid. Every part of it has its own shape and size; some (bones) are round, some are long, some are broad, some are hollow, and some are solid, each one is mounted on the other. In the size, shape, and appearance of each, there is a wisdom; rather, there are many wisdoms. Then, He made the bones the pillars of the body and He built everything upon them. If (the skeleton) were one piece, thou wouldst not be able to bend thy spine. If it were scattered loosely about, thou wouldst not be able to hold thy spine straight or stand upon thy feet. Therefore, He created it in segments so that it could bend. Then He put it together and

wound sinews and veins on it and made it strong. Then, He made it like a single unit to stand erect when needed.

On each vertebra (of the spine), He brought out four projections like swellings and in the vertebra beneath it four depressions like hollows so that those projections would be seated in the hollows and stand firm. From the sides of the vertebrae, He brought out projections so that the sinews could be wound about them, to strengthen them, so that one rests upon another. He made thy whole skull of fifty-five pieces of bone and bound them together with fine seams so that if one part is damaged, the others will be sound and all will not be broken. He created teeth, some with broad crowns to grind food, and others with thin and sharp crowns to cut and break up food and (then) pass (the pieces) to the molars. Then, He created seven vertebrae for the neck with veins and sinews tightly wound about them and mounted the head upon them. He created the spine of twenty-four vertebrae and placed the neck on it. He inserted the broad ribs in these vertebrae, and the same for the other bones, the description of which would be lengthy. In sum, He created two hundred and forty-eight bones in thy body, each one with a special purpose so that thine affair would be correct and prepared. He created all of this out of that despicable fluid. If one of those bones were missing, thou wouldst be rendered helpless; if there were one more of them, thou wouldst (also) be helpless.⁵⁴

PERCEPTION

With the development of the animal soul, our sense of perception begins to operate to distinguish images from objects in reality. Perception as a function of animals consists of five external and internal sensible and psychic senses.

FIVE EXTERNAL SENSES

The five external senses are the abilities to see, hear, taste, touch and smell. These external senses are each capable of a basic perception of things that are actually present to the external sense organs. Their perception, however, is based on a single kind of impression.

FIVE INTERNAL SENSES

The five inner senses are the abilities to have common sense, imagination, representation, rational perception and memory.

⁵⁴ Alchemy, pp. 851-2.

COMMON SENSE

Common sense, the first internal sense, is the storehouse for all impressions from the outer world. It directly receives the contents of the five external senses. For instance, when an apple is perceived, through "common" sense, we distinguish the different states of the apple and realize that every part of the apple possesses taste, smell, color, warmth, or cold.

There are four functions connected to common sense: to receive an impression; to act on it as arbiter of reports from the five external senses; to transmit the results to a more inward sense; to reduce contrary images to a unity of perception thereby destroying false impressions which may arise from several impressions received at the same time from different senses. It is the most basic sense of internal perception. Second is the internal sense of retaining forms or representation. This comes into action after common sense has stopped. It stores and retains the forms received by common sense. Third is sensible/rational imagination.

Perception is of three types: sensible, psychic, and cognitive/rational. The sensible functions include external and internal senses. Psychic and cognitive perception can be processed, as well, through the internal senses alone.

Although common sense, representation, and sensible imagination are held in common by animals and us, there are differences because of the human capacity for rationality.

REPRESENTATION

Representation receives images that have been received and sorted by the common sense. Its main function within the self is to continue the thought process, to recommend important forms to the deliberations of rational imagination and to store them in memory. It retains impressions longer than common sense does and tries them in balance.

IMAGINATION

While being referred to as sensible imagination in animals, imagination forms the basis of psychical perception. Whereas sensible perception is particular, imagination is general and it culminates in cognitive or rational perception so that it is the intermediary between the sensible and the rational. It is active while we are both awake and asleep and is the cause of dreams. It can operate either out of the immediate experience of intuition or out of the deliberations of reason.

As soon as the rational sense makes distinctions of universal meanings and presents them to our sense of reason to look more closely into them through the insight of our ability to reason, our sense of reason

looks at them through the image which the imaginative sense represents. Our sense of reason or rational sense distinguishes whether the image is perfect or not perfect, common or not common. It thinks immediately of the intelligible meanings. This is the way that universal meanings are understood by artists and scientists. When the artist, for example, thinks about how to make an object, he presents the image of the particular article to his imagination and prepares his plan to make it. Similarly, when a scientist looks into the object of knowledge to know its nature and give its description, he presents its image to his imagination.

Imagination writes in memory impressions of things received by the five external senses as well as by reason in addition to things it composes itself. It is like a person who writes himself a note to remind himself of something, and later reads the note and mentally adds something from his mind at that moment to the note. Later imagination may return to the forms and activate them without the intervention of the external senses. In this case, it is activated by the affective or behavioral systems attracting us to pleasure or avoiding harm. It has also been noted that imagination is more likely to follow the senses than to follow reason. Once the senses are satiated, imagination is free to busy itself with other forms. Imagination is never idle. It often leads us to confusion.

It is quite possible for our imagination to oppose reason. Since it is closer to the external senses than it is to reason, it may allure us to the affective or behavioral systems to establish a coalition against reason. Rash judgments are strengthened in this way.

Imagination plays a crucial role in us. It develops ideals and is naturally disposed to pass those that are of sufficient magnitude onto reason for deliberation. It also communicates with the spiritual heart where the energy of the affective-behavioral systems or animal soul resides. It has to do with both thought and action. It receives sense impressions before it can respond. Imagination has considerable authority over our "self." Because of its freedom and its dual relation to reason and the affective-behavioral systems or animal soul, it exercises an important influence on conduct, which may not be to our best advantage in trying to center our "self" as it is considered that right conduct comes from reason.

COGNITIVE/RATIONAL PERCEPTION

The fourth internal sense marks cognitive or rational perception within us. Cognition may be achieved in two basic ways: first through discursive reasoning, deliberation, and drawing conclusions. This is referred to as reason or rationality. The second type of cognition is that of direct awareness or experience and is referred to as intuition, its extension being gnosis. With the latter, cognition is attained without learning or making an effort to acquire cognition.

Making up the fourth internal sense, intuition/reason can operate without any sensible impressions. As reason, this type of internal perception is inclined towards the deduction of sciences, crafts, and the perception of intelligibles. Just as sensible imagination contained the ability to perceive information from the external senses and motivate attraction to pleasure and avoidance of harm, so, also, reason has a perceptive ability and a motivational one. Its perceptive ability is that of deliberation and understanding. Its motivating force is that of will power.

These two—conscience and will power—are referred to as the practical intellect. As the final point in an act, the practical intellect receives and illuminates ideas that have come from our imagination. It also has a reflective power by which it examines its own actions and certain innate criteria that provide knowledge of universal and practical guidance. Because of these natural dispositions, we not only comprehend particular forms, but also are able to distinguish between positive and negative dispositions and ultimately to arrive at Divine Truth.

Reason is used when our intellect considers material things and understanding is used by which universal, spiritual truths are comprehended. When reason strives towards contemplation, it is called the cognitive intellect. When it seeks the positive and having found it goes forward to the will in order that we may follow the positive or flee from the negative, it is called the practical intellect which contains the Active Intellect within itself. It is also referred to as wisdom. From each of the functions a habit of life may develop—contemplative or active. The word active is used in regard to the practical intellect because it does not stop with the discovery of a positive or negative trait but goes forward with the will.

MEMORY AND/OR RECALL

The fifth sense is that of memory or recall. Natural dispositions are held in storage here which we only need to be reminded of to recall. It does not, however, hold the forms gathered by common sense and retained by the second internal sense.

MOTIVATION

In addition to perception, we also contain a motivational system as part of the animal soul. Motivation, including will power, renders us capable of action. Motivation is of two types: the first gives an impulse requiring a voluntary response and the second involuntarily causes the body to react on its own accord. When a pleasurable or painful image is imprinted on the internal sense called sensible imagination, it rouses us to movement. This impulsive arousal has two subdivisions.

As previously stated, these two naturally disposed, unconscious/preconscious functions within our animal soul make-up its two basic

systems. Known in philosophy as the concupiscible or attraction to pleasure and irascible or avoidance of pain, in psychological terms they are referred to as "attraction to pleasure" or "the pleasure principle" and "avoidance of pain" or "the pain principle." They are essentially the unconscious, affective/emotive and the preconscious, behavioral systems.

Our voluntary motivation contains, in addition to the properties of animal motivation, free will. It is the highest form of motivation in nature's mode of operation and is independent of conscience or reason. It may do as it pleases, our spiritual heart will be held responsible in the Hereafter for our intentions or motivations for the choices we make.

OUR COGNITIVE SYSTEM

The cognitive system is the control center for thought and actions of our conscience, free will, and ability to gain consciousness of our "self." The norm in traditional psychology is for the cognitive system to regulate the preconscious (not to the extent that it can come to know, but to the extent that it can be disciplined) behavioral and unconscious affective natural dispositions by keeping them in a state of equilibrium or moderation in terms of the Straight Path.

THE INTELLECT

THE PRACTICAL INTELLECT

We are also equipped through universal guidance with what is known as the practical intellect as part of the process of nature in its mode of operation.

Whenever we intend to create something, we first form an image of it in our practical intellect (conscience and free will), which transfers it to the internal sense of imagination. We then set the organs into motion to bring it into being. Our practical intellect understands and abstracts in imagination.

When our practical intellect operates out of the internal sense of imagination, it abstracts the image of the thing to be created according to a particular form or size. Self-motivation then moves the organs to create the object. Thus, it is the practical intellect which first creates the thing and not self-motivation of the organs. The self is naturally disposed to motivation but only does so in the Creative Act when the practical intellect causes the thing to be created to appear in the internal sense of imagination. Only after that does self-motivation cause the things to be created by the use of the organs.

The practical intellect, then, has two functions: to present to the internal sense of imagination the image of the thing to be created; and to have the thing come into being outside the self by motivating the organs of the body.

It is through our practical intellect that we love or hate, live in society, and have friends and positive dispositions. The practical intellect is the locus of the highest forms of perception and motivation. The highest form of nature in its mode of operation in the perceptive system within the self is the conscience, which is the source of the general principles upon which morality is based. The highest form of nature in its mode of operation in the voluntary motivational system is choice or free will. It receives sensible and cognitive stimuli from the external and internal senses. When the stimuli are purely sensible, they have been first passed from the senses to the attraction to pleasure or avoidance of harm systems and from there to the practical intellect where a response is given. When the stimuli are purely cognitive, they pass directly into the practical intellect for action. When the stimuli are both sensible and cognitive, the practical intellect is the locus of operation for deliberation and the production of some action including human arts and sciences. The practical intellect contains the cognitive intellect and the latter develops through four stages.

THE COGNITIVE INTELLECT

There are four stages in the acquiring of the cognitive intellect that is held in preparedness within the practical intellect. Each one is called an intellect. Once the practical intellect acquires these intellects by completing the perfection of nature in its mode of operation within the self, that is, when the self is centered, the practical intellect then operates through the Active Intellect. The four stages are: potential, habitual, Active, and acquired intellects.

At the first stage of the potential intellect, the self thinks nothing but is prepared to think. Here the intellect cannot be creative in the act of knowledge. It is simply receptive to it. If there is actual knowledge at this stage, we will not understand the reality of it. Out of this, through "reminders" grows the habitual intellect. Here the possibility of actualizing the potential intellect's preparedness exists. This means knowing the principles or axioms of knowledge, like the whole, is greater than the sum of its parts. The Active Intellect is the stage when we no longer need a physical form. It is solely concerned with intellectual demonstrations and is either acquired or bestowed as a Divine Gift. The Active Intellect, the center of all forms of thought, has a natural disposition by which it can reflect and then perform the act of thinking. It also has a reflective power by which it examines its own actions and certain criteria of its natural disposition which provides knowledge of the law of God and nature. By virtue of these naturally disposed notions, we not only comprehend particular and material forms, but, also, as a result of several processes, distinguish between positive and negative traits and arrive ultimately at universal and Divine truths.

The Active Intellect operates through three stages: exercise of deliberation, exercise of conscience, drawing conclusions.

Finally, there is the acquired intellect, which is the highest stage of the intellects. These stages are like signs upon the way of centering of self and beyond. The traveler is always our "self." At the stage of the acquired intellect, every conceptual form potentially contained in us becomes apparent to us like the face of a person reflected in a mirror held before us.

Here acquisition ceases. All the forms exist in the cognitive intellect, held within the practical intellect, which is in a state where we can perform the act of thinking which occurs when the Active Intellect causes the habitual intellect to reflect back on itself and through this process, we begin to think about the forms we have.

The cognitive intellect, then, is concerned with the cognition of truth. The objects that this natural disposition deals with are necessary, universal, and unchangeable like mathematical properties. They can be contemplated, but not deliberated for there is only one truth. The cognitive intellect is the part of the perceptive system where forms are imprinted. If the form exists in matter, it abstracts them. If they are already abstract, it receives them. It is located within the practical intellect.

THE PROCESS OF ACTIVATING THOUGHT/ACTION

The process of thought in which action results, according to traditional psychology, can be described in the following way: when an object is perceived by the external senses (seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling), nervous energy enables each organ affected to receive a particular kind of impression to which it has been naturally disposed to adapt. The impressions are sometimes vague and may be contradictory. Nervous energy hastens to the locus of common sense where the impressions of the external senses are reduced to a unity and stored in the internal sense of representation, which continues the thought process and gives the image to the internal sense of imagination.

This internal sense, having been able to elaborate ideas because of the nervous energy it has received, may assign the images to memory or may recommend them to reason and understanding before storing them for future use. If action is required, our imagination communicates to our spiritual heart informing it about the pleasure or pain of the object. At the same instant, the images or ideas, compounded by the imagination from their original, simple impressions, are abstracted and perceived by our sense of reason. Reason deliberates and draws a conclusion that it presents to our free will as positive or negative. Our free will, being the final decision maker, then decides to accept or reject the counsel of reason. The affective-behavioral systems (or animal soul) obey our free

will and set to work those things necessary for action. They command us to motion to attract the pleasure or avoid pain.

This is the procedure for thought/action when our cognitive system is in balance. If our nurturing process has not been oriented towards preserving a healthy moral self, reason's advice will not be accepted by our free will. Our free will may even be bypassed by the affective-behavioral systems and respond to imagination themselves, singularly or together, in commanding the self to action.

Our external-internal senses involved in sensible perception are naturally disposed to cooperate in such a way that each lower sense provides an image or stimulus adequate to the needs of the sense directly above it. Impressions received by the external senses become increasingly "abstracted" and "purified of the sensible," passing through our psychical perception of imagination until they culminate in the cognitive system's positive disposition of wisdom. Thus, our knowledge passes through several levels from the single sensible impression of each one of the external senses involved, through psychical perception, to the extent of spiritual truths. We then understand many things which are beyond impressions provided by the external senses, from which our spirit of self is moved just as the external senses are moved by external objects.

The knowledge that we receive from the external senses is like shadows of them. The knowledge we have from common sense, representation, and imagination is as if we looked upon the images with more clarity than their shadows. The knowledge we have of understanding is as if we viewed not only the shadows and clear images of things, but also their very presence. The knowledge we have by reason is as if in addition to the shadow, clear image, and presence of an object, we saw its effects as well so that the nature of the object as it really is may be known.

Perception, then, evolves ideas in various stages of completion. The degree of perception is accompanied by a corresponding degree of motivation. First is our perception from the external senses which our nervous energy presents to our organs to give us elementary knowledge of an object from which we receive a stimulus. This perception is limited. For instance, if an object perceived is too large, our sight needs the help of the internal senses. None of the external senses, without the help of imagination and memory, can build up impressions.

Next, come psychical impressions in our imagination which have no external form or abstract images of to understand to then will some response. Each of these may give rise to an attraction to pleasure or avoidance of pain response.

The structure of our "self" develops out of nature in its mode of operation in the mineral, plant, and animal. It shares the elements and their qualities with minerals; assimilative, reproductive, and growth

functions with the plant; and perception and motivation with animals. We begin to distinguish our "self" from the animal at the level of the third internal sense where we can employ free will to obey God's Will while the animal has no choice. It has to obey God's Will.

Out of our motivation comes our attraction to pleasure and avoidance of harm as well as our free will. Out of our perception, our conscience is illuminated. Our practical intellect evolves out of the combination of perception and motivation. Out of the practical intellect, the cognitive intellect develops. When our practical intellect is served by conscience, will power and understanding, it reflects on us through the presence of the Active Intellect and we become conscious of self. Our practical intellect is then called our Active Intellect. In order to be more certain that centering will be attained, al-Ghazzali says the natural way is for our Active Intellect to consciously make our will power choose that which is more difficult. This way we can be more assured that we are allowing the cognitive system to regulate. But even then, according to traditional psychology, the only way to be sure of being centered is through receiving Divine Grace (right guidance, confirmation and support).

The appearance of our Active Intellect marks the beginning of our greater struggle. Once centered, it is our Active Intellect operating out of the internal sense of imagination, by-passing reason and deliberation, that regulates us as we move as a spiraling center on the conscious return to the Source.

Where are you going?

Al-Ghazzali says that we are going to either heaven or hell and describes our sojourn on earth as a business transaction.

So, the wise and the great ones of religion have realized that they have come into this world to engage in business, and the transactions are with the self. The profit or loss of these transactions is heaven and hell; rather, it is eternal happiness and misery. Therefore, one's self is put in the position of a business partner. Just as with a partner, conditions are made. Then, he is watched, and then he is audited. If he has been treacherous, he will be punished or reproved. So, (the wise and the saints), too, have stood with their selves in these six stations: fixing mutual conditions, vigilance, reckoning, punishment, striving, and reproof.⁵⁵

Why are you here?

Al-Ghazzali sees the reason for being here is to love God.

⁵⁵ Alchemy, p. 825.

Know that love is valuable jewel. Claiming love is easy, so that a person may think that he is one of the lovers, but there are signs and proofs of love. One must seek the signs in oneself, and they are seven:

THE FIRST (SIGN) is that there is no loathing for death, for no friend dislikes the sight of the Friend. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever loves the sight of God Most High, God Most High loves the sight of him, too." Buwayti said to one of the ascetics: "Dost thou love death?" The ascetic hesitated in replying. (Buwayti) said: "If thou wert truthful, thou wouldst love it." However, it is permissible that there be love and loathing at the hastening of death—(but) not at the principle of death—so that one who has not yet prepared his provisions (for the Hereafter) may make (them). The sign of this is that one is impatient in preparing the provisions.

THE SECOND SIGN is that one prefers that which is loved by God Most High to that which is loved by him. He does not neglect anything he knows may be the cause of his proximity to the Beloved. He avoids all that causes his distancing (himself) from that. This is a person who loves God Most High with all his soul. As the Messenger (S) said: "Say to whoever wishes to see a person who loves God with all his heart: 'Look at Salim, the client of Hudhayfah.'"

Moreover, if a person commits a sin, it does not follow that he is not a lover (of God). Instead, his love is not with his whole heart. The evidence of this is that Nu'ayman was punished several times for drinking wine. Someone cursed him in the presence of the Messenger (S). The Messenger (S) said: "Curse him not, for he loves God Most High and His Messenger." Fudayl said: "When thou art asked if thou lovest God, remain silent. If thou sayest 'no,' thou becomest an unbeliever. If thou sayest 'yes,' thy behavior does not resemble the acts of the lovers (of God)."

THE THIRD SIGN is that one always renews the remembrance of God Most High in one's soul and is eager to do that without taking pains; for whoever loves a thing remembers it frequently. If the love is complete, one never forgets (the object of love) itself. Yet, if one must force the heart to remember, it is feared that his beloved is that His remembrance dominate his soul. Consequently, it may be that the love for God Most High is not dominant, but the love for the love of Him dominates him who desires to love. Love is one thing and the love of love is another.

THE FOURTH SIGN is that one loves the Quran, which is His Word, and the Messenger, (S) and all that is established by Him. When the love has become strong, one loves all mankind, for all are His servants. Indeed, one loves all extant

things, for all are His creation, just as one who loves someone loves his composition and writing.

THE FIFTH SIGN is that one is avid for conversation (with God) in private and desirous for the coming of night. Crowds and hindrances depart and one holds conversation with the Friend in private. If one prefers sleep and idle chatter to solitude during the night and the day, one's love is weak. Revelation came to David (A): "O David, become the intimate of no one among mankind. No one is cut off from Me save two persons: one is he who hastens in the search for spiritual reward. When it comes late to him, he becomes languid. The other is he who forgets Me and is satisfied with his own condition. The sign of that is that I leave him alone and I keep him bewildered in the world."

Therefore, if love is total, affection for nothing else remains. There was a worshipper among the Children of Israel who would perform formal prayer at night. He would take his praying to beneath a tree where a bird with a sweet voice would sing. Revelation came to the messenger of the era: "Tell him: 'Thou hast become accustomed to seclusion. Thy degree has fallen because thou are not attending to anything of that.'"

Some have achieved such a degree in their conversations (with God) that fire has broken out in the other side of the dwelling and they did not become aware of it! The foot of one of them was cut during (his) formal prayer on some pretext, and he was unaware of it. Revelation came to David (A): "A person who claimed to love Me lied and slept all night. Does the friend not desire the sight of the Friend? Whoever seeks me, I am with him." Moses (A) said: "O Lord God, where art Thou that I may seek Thee?" He answered: "Whenever thou hast intended to seek (Me), thou hast found (Me)."

THE SIXTH SIGN is that worship becomes easy for one and its burdensomeness falls away. Someone says: "For twenty years I forced myself strenuously to perform the night formal prayer. Afterwards, I have taken delight in that for twenty years." When love becomes strong, no pleasure equals the pleasure of worship. How can it itself be difficult?

THE SEVENTH SIGN is that one loves all of His devout servants and one is merciful and compassionate to them, and one holds all unbelievers and rebels (against God) in enmity. As He said: *(They are) hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.* (Q. 48:29) One of the prophets asked: "O Lord God, who are Thy saints and friends?" He answered: "Those who are captivated with Me, like small children are captivated with their mothers. And just as a bird takes refuge in its nest, they take refuge with the remembrance of Me. Just as a leopard becomes enraged and fears nothing, they become enraged when a person commits a sin."

These and signs like these are many. They are present in him whose love is complete. The love of him who has some of them in him is in accordance with that (amount).⁵⁶

For what purpose were you created?

One answer al-Ghazzali gives is to be a lover of goodness.

Know that since love is the greatest of the stations, becoming acquainted with the remedy for achieving that is important. For, whoever desires to become a lover of goodness, the first step is that he turn away from all things except (the beloved). Then, he continuously looks upon (the beloved). When he sees (only the beloved's) face, but the hands, feet, and hair are concealed—and that is also good—he strives to see (the rest) also, so that every beauty he sees will increase his inclination. If he is persevering, the inclination will appear in him, small or great.

Then, the love for God Most High is also thus. The first condition is that one turn one's face away from the world and cleanse one's soul from loving it, for the love for other than God Most High will distract (one) from the love for Him. This is like cleaning the ground of thorns and weeds. Then, one seeks the spiritual knowledge of Him; for, the cause of anyone's not loving Him is that he has not come to know Him. If that (were) not so, (His) beauty and perfection would naturally be beloved. When a person comes to know (Abu Bakr) Siddiq and ('Umar) Faruq, he cannot not love them. Their virtues and laudable acts naturally (inspire) love. Obtaining spiritual knowledge is like putting a seed in the soil. Then, one continually occupies oneself in remembrance (of God) and meditation. This is like watering (the seed), for whoever remembers a person much, will certainly find an intimacy with him.⁵⁷

In what does your happiness lie? In what does your misery lie?

According to al-Ghazzali, one sign of happiness is repentance and one sin of misery is sin.

Whoever has understood the true nature of the human soul and what the manner of its connection to the body is, its relationship to the Divine Presence, and what the cause of the veil between it and the (Divine Presence) is, one does not doubt that sin is the cause of the veil and repentance is the cause of acceptance. For, the human soul is, in its origin, a

⁵⁶ Alchemy, pp. 923-5.

⁵⁷ Alchemy, p. 922.

pure essence of the essence of the angels. It is like a mirror in which the Divine Presence shows Itself when, upon departure from this world, (the soul) has not been tarnished. With every sin one commits, a darkness is deposited upon the mirror of the soul; and with every act of devotion, a light attaches itself to it and drives off that darkness from the soul.

The effects of the lights of devotion and the darkness of sins are continually following one another in the mirror. When the darkness has become great and one has repented, the lights of devotion rout the darkness. The soul returns to its clarity and purity. However, if one is so stubborn in one's sinning that the tarnish has reached the essence of the soul, and penetrated it deeply, it will not be receptive to treatment any more. It is like the mirror that has been corroded by tarnish. Such a soul is itself unable to repent, except by (uselessly) uttering with the tongue: "I have repented."⁵⁸

Our happiness also lies in being proactive in the battle between our angelic and satanic forces according to al-Ghazzali:

As a result, there is continuous warfare and opposition between these two armies. One says: "Do it!" while the other says: "Do it not!" One remains continually between these two importuning (forces). If the religious impulse is dug in firmly in the battle with the carnal impulse and is steadfast, its steadfastness) is called "patience." Therefore, that is the meaning of patience. If it overcomes the carnal impulse and repulses it, its triumph is called "victory." While the battle continues in him, this is called "the earnest striving against the self." So, the meaning of patience is the remaining firm of the religious impulse in opposition against the carnal impulse. Wherever these two opposing armies are not present, there is no patience. This is because there is no need of patience for the angels, while beasts and children do not themselves have the power of patience.

...The point is that thou know that patience is a battlefield, and a battlefield is a place where there are two opposing armies. These two armies—one is the angelic cavalry and the other is the demonic cavalry—are gathered in the human breast. Therefore, the first step in the way of religion is involving oneself in this battle, for the demonic hosts have seized the field of the breast in childhood, and the angelic hosts have appeared at the approach of puberty. Consequently, so long as one has not triumphed over the carnal appetite, one will not achieve his (spiritual) happiness. So long as one does not fight and is not steadfast in battle, one

⁵⁸ Alchemy, p. 695.

will not prevail. Whoever does not involve himself in this war is he who has surrendered his guardianship to Satan. And whoever has controlled his appetite and made it obedient to the Law has prevailed over it, is as the Messenger (S) said: *"God aided me in the battle with Satan so that he surrendered to me."* Usually one is engaged in earnest struggle. One time there is victory, another time rout; one time appetite prevails, and another time the religious impulse. That fortress will not be conquered save with patience and steadfastness.⁵⁹

As one obtains victory in the battle within, al-Ghazzali points out that one's longing for God increases bringing greater spiritual happiness.

So, thou must recognize the meaning of longing, what longing for God Most High is, for there is no love without longing. But, one by whom this is not recognized at all, has no longing. If it is recognized, is present, and is seen; it is also not longing. Therefore, longing is for something that is present in one respect and absent in another, like the beloved who is present in the imagination, but absent from the eye. The meaning of longing is "request" and "seeking" for that to become present in the eye so that perception may become complete. Then, from this thou comest to know that it is not possible for the longing for God Most High to be fulfilled in this world. It is present in spiritual knowledge, but absent from witnessing. Witnessing is the perfection of spiritual knowledge, just as seeing is the perfection of the imagination.⁶⁰

4. As for those attributes which are gathered inside you: some are the attributes of beasts of burden, some are the attributes of predatory animals, some are the attributes of satanic forces, and some are the attributes of the angels. Which of these is you? Which is the truth of your essential nature, while the others are foreign and borrowed? If you do not know this, you cannot seek your own happiness, because for each of these there is a different nutriment and a different happiness.

Whereas in the first three paragraphs of the Prolegomena, al-Ghazzali places emphasis on knowledge, here at paragraphs four, five and six, it is more about his second fundamental—states—and its aspect of will power, that which gives to or withholds energy from the self or without it.

⁵⁹ Alchemy, pp. 712, 713.

⁶⁰ Alchemy, p. 927.

According to al-Ghazzali, while we have bestial (lust, attraction to pleasure), predatory (anger, avoidance of pain) and satanic tendencies (hypocrisy, envy, greed, etc.) within us, we also have angelic qualities. The choice we make as to what character we want to have is based on our free will.

Al-Ghazzali describes two angels in particular—conscience and will power. He calls conscience and will power the religious impulse and lust and anger (the animal soul) in their various levels as satanic powers. This, then, is another battle of the greater struggle against the same enemy—religious impulse (the angelic hosts of conscience and will power) against the animal soul (satanic hosts, i.e. lust and anger):

Moreover, at first, a human being is created in the character of the beasts, and the craving for food, clothing, decoration, amusement, and play have been made dominant over him. Then, at the time of puberty, a light from the angelic lights appears in him and he sees the results of affairs in that light. Indeed, two angels have been appointed over him, of which the beasts are deprived. One angel guides him and shows him the way by means of a light which spreads to him from the lights of the angel so that he recognizes the end of affairs and sees the prudence of affairs, until he comes to know himself and God Most High by that light. He understands that the end result of the appetites is total destruction, even if there be delight for the moment. He understands that his pleasure and ease are quickly transitory, while his sorrow will be long lasting. This guidance is not for the beasts...⁶¹

Our conscience operates out of our practical intellect. Our practical intellect is the place of our conscience. It is a natural disposition in us and exists to some extent in animals who are naturally disposed to know that their very survival depends on them staying with the mean, on the Straight Path. Our conscience is also naturally predisposed but because of our free will, we are free to accept or reject the advice of our conscience. Al-Ghazzali, then turns to free will or will power.

However, this guidance is not sufficient, for if one learns that (something) causes loss and that one does not possess the power to ward it off, what is the benefit? A sick person knows that the disease is harmful to him, but he is unable to repulse it. Therefore, God, may He be praised, has appointed the other angel over him to give him strength and power and to support and direct him so that he will refrain

⁶¹ Alchemy, p. 711.

from that which he has learned is harmful to him. As it is his need that he control his lusts, something else must appear in him to oppose that in order to escape harm in the future. This compulsion for opposition is that of the angelic hosts, while the compulsion to give rein to the appetites is that of the demonic hosts. This compulsion to oppose the carnal appetite is what we call the "religious impulse," and the compulsion to give rein to the carnal appetites we call the "carnal impulse."⁶²

God has given us the instrument to be able to overcome the negative tendencies (lust, attraction to pleasure, bestial, and anger, avoidance of pain, predatory as well as imagination in the service of lust and anger or satanic forces within) and that is through our free will power.

Our free will is the highest developed form of motivation in nature's mode of operation. It is naturally disposed by universal guidance to be fair and just as well as to avoid conflict. When our nurturing process is oriented towards preserving our moral health, our free will is gradually trained to accept the counsel of cognition (thinking and reasoning). Cognition, as has been mentioned, contains both the cognitive and practical intellect.

Through habit, our free will has learned to seek the counsel of cognition before making a decision. Our free will deliberates, comes to an understanding of the situation and draws a conclusion. Our free will is then free to accept or reject the conclusion. However, as our free will has a choice, it makes the final decision. Our ability to reason is only a guide, a counselor. Our free will is naturally disposed to be higher than our ability to reason.

Al-Ghazzali points out:

So long as he is subservient to his free will and that which it does is not in accordance to the rule of the Religious Law, he is following his lusts. His behavior is not that of a servant of God. His (spiritual) happiness lies in his servitude.⁶³

If our free will accepts the advice, we regulate our "self" (body, spirit, soul, heart) in a state of balance and harmony, centered in positive dispositions like temperance, courage, and wisdom. If another benefits from this centeredness, we have attained the highest of the positive dispositions, that of being fair and just towards the Creator, the self, nature, and others.

⁶² Alchemy, pp. 711-12.

⁶³ Alchemy, p. 195.

FREE WILL REBELS AGAINST REASON

When our nurturing process has not fostered the development of a healthy moral self, we have not been nurtured to operate out of reason. Instead, we operate out of the locus of intuition through imagination.

The process is explained like this: our free will seeks the advice of our reason. Our reason responds through our imagination, an internal sense, as has been shown, that is more firmly connected to our animal soul (affective/behavioral systems) than to reason (the cognitive system). The irrational alliance of our free will and animal soul (affect-behavior or lust, anger) combine to force our ability to reason (our cognitive system) to begin to rationalize and legitimize desires that our animal soul (lust and anger, the affective-behavioral systems) could never conceive. We develop what is called overconsciousness.

In this situation, instead of our free will exercising its natural disposition to fairness and justice, our free will falls under its stronger natural disposition to avoid conflict. In doing so, our free will loses its own liberty and freedom, allowing unconscious and preconscious forces to dominate it. Since the animal soul (affect-behavior systems, lust and anger, attraction to pleasure and avoidance of pain) is not capable of consciousness, they are not able to regulate us, but can dominate over our free will.

Our free will often refuses the advice of our reason just to show that it is free. Everything depends on the decision of our free will. Our reason is only a guide. Our free will, then, is subject to a kind of depravity which extends to all aspects of our "self." Our free will may be depraved through false reasoning or through choosing unrestrained freedom and an inclination to content the senses. When our free will turns from understanding and reason, there is nothing we can do but do what it wants in agreement with the external senses. According to traditional psychology, it is almost impossible to retrieve a perverted will.

FREE WILL ALLIES WITH IMAGINATION AGAINST REASON

Our imagination is likely to become an enemy of our ability to reason. As our sense of imagination is near the outer or external senses (seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling), it may seduce us to accept something and then, as an intermediary between our external senses and our animal soul (lust and anger, affective-behavioral systems), establish a coalition against our ability to reason. This could explain how rash judgments are strengthened in our imagination arousing our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems), and overthrowing our ability to reason. Our imagination can be a dangerous guide to us in terms of our ability to center our "self."

*FREE WILL ALLIES WITH IMAGINATION
AND THE EXTERNAL SENSES AGAINST REASON*

Our knowledge, it will be recalled, is dependent upon our external senses because they are the doors through which all impressions from the outer world pass to our higher functions of thought and they may also dominate over our ability to reason. The ready response of our ability to reason the reports from the outer or external senses by-pass our conscience as they quickly turn to a new stimulus. The external senses are easily moved by the animal soul (affective-behavioral systems). A picture or mere description is enough to awaken passions of love or grief.

The strength of our sense impressions as opposed to our ability to reason can be recalled when we reflect on the parting of two friends. The idea of some particular gesture in a parting friend strikes us more deeply than all the reasoning in the world. The sound of a name repeated, certain words, or a sad tone goes to our very heart. A present object moves our animal soul (affective-behavioral system) much more vehemently than when we perceive an image through our recall. When the desired thing is not present, our imagination represents the pleasure as far off, but when the thing desired is present, nothing seems to be left but to attain it.

Our external senses are capable of a degree of knowledge and of pleasure and pain. Since they cannot comprehend the full meaning of objects presented to them, they report to us merely outward images and in their impressions emphasize qualities agreeable to our external senses rather than to our general welfare. Not knowing all that takes place in imagination and in reason, the external senses may accept enemies as friends. Through their strength, they may provoke serious disturbances in us.

They work on our imagination without waiting for our reasoning to deliberate; they set off an alarm to our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems) to the extent that the voice of our reason cannot be heard nor the advice of understanding be accepted by our free will. Representing pleasures that are most apparent and present, they strongly provoke our animal soul. Even though they are our first teacher, instead of freeing us from deceit, they are seen to be able to deceive us themselves.

*FREE WILL ALLIES WITH IMAGINATION IN THE
AFFECTIVE-BEHAVIORAL SYSTEMS
(ANIMAL SOUL) AGAINST REASON*

Our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems) is naturally disposed to allow us to regulate it through our ability to reason. When it joins in an alliance with our free will, our animal soul and free will

follow the external senses. Our outer or external senses respond to an object. Our reason deliberates. Our free will is naturally disposed towards the positive as is our reason. However, when our free will is under the influence of our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems), our free will only sees the present, which fills our imagination more readily than does the future, and our reason is subdued.

Our free will is a superior function to our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems). It is joined with our reason in the same way our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems) is joined to our imagination. We are naturally disposed to guide our free will towards action that is for our well-being. However, we contain an inferior kind of thought-action process and that is the process of imagination-animal soul (affective-behavioral systems). Both of the latter (imagination and affective-behavior) act rashly without the deliberation of our reason. They are often too powerful to allow our reason to advise and our free will to accept the advice.

Our will is easily misled. Naturally inclined to avoid conflict, it succumbs to our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems). They all grow out of our system of motivation and so have an established relationship. Our reason can control our action only through our free will and our free will frequently yields to our animal soul (affective-behavioral systems). Strife within us is most often between our reason and our systems arising out of motivation. Our external senses entice our imagination and our imagination joins with the animal soul (affective-behavioral systems) and they, in turn, entice our free will away from following our reason.

CENTERING THROUGH FREE WILL

As nature in its mode of operation was perfected by the Creator in us with the gift of consciousness, bypassing our free will causes an imbalance in our natural harmony and equilibrium. This is because the process of our free will within us needs to consciously seek the counsel of reason as the regulator of nature within us. When our regulator is bypassed, our system loses its balance and equilibrium. If our nurturing process has not been able to preserve a healthy, moral self, traditional psychology provides the means to restore health.

If our free will accepts the guidance of our reason, we can become centered (as long as our reason remains balanced as well). The ideas upon which our internal sense of reason deliberates come from our imagination. Our internal sense of imagination may be functioning according to the Divine Will, operating through universal and particular guidance. This process becomes strong when good habits are formed in us from birth.

Without this, we become prone to negative traits and our free will is not inclined towards choosing positive traits or attitudes. It is motivated by our natural disposition of attraction to pleasure, the original goal of which is to preserve the species. However, when it is unregulated, even our species is threatened by over, under or undeveloped eating, sex, drinking, and so forth. Our mirror of self is so encrusted with rust and dust that we no longer can see our "self." We become alienated from our natural disposition and lose all sense of identity and direction. We readily then forget our original goal of submission to the Will of God by completing the perfection of nature in its mode of operation, that is, becoming conscious of our "self." We are no longer able to avoid pain/harm because the natural disposition of even our immunity systems break down. Our free will, naturally disposed to be free to choose or not to choose to submit to the Will of God, is no longer free but enslaved by our animal soul (affective and behavioral systems) leading to the tyranny of our "self" in complete opposition to the original natural disposition of our free will to being just.

Al-Ghazzali recognizes the human will to control everything, but points out that lacking the power to do so, we seek knowledge of everything in order to gain mastery.

There is this in the nature of a human being that requires him to desire that he be everything. Since he is incapable of this, he desires that everything be his; that is, that everything be subservient to him and under his control and (subject to) his will. However, he is incapable of achieving this also, for there are two kinds of existing things:

ONE KIND is that which the control of man does not touch, such as the heavens, stars, the substances of the angels and the devils, and that which is beneath the earth, at the depths of the oceans, and under mountains. Therefore, man desires to conquer all of these through knowledge so that they come under the control of his knowledge, even though they are not in his power. For this reason, he desires that the kingdoms of heaven and earth, the wonders of the land and sea, all be made known, just as a person who is incapable of arranging the chess pieces, but wishes in all events to know how they have been placed, for this too is a kind of mastery.⁶⁴

And once we are winning the battle with our animal soul (lust and anger) and our satanic aspect (ego, imagination), we have "cleared our heart of the thorns of worldly temptation," al-Ghazzali speaks of the seeds of good character that will be able to grow.

⁶⁴ Alchemy, p. 596.

So, when the soul has been cleared of the thorns of worldly temptations and the seeds have been planted, nothing still remains that is related to free choice. (The soul) has chosen to be there (in that condition). After that, one remains waiting for what will grow and appear. Usually the seed is not wasted, for God Most High says: *Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We give him increase in his harvest.* (Q. 42:20) He says: "Whoever cultivates the work of the Hereafter and sows the seed, We shall bestow increase upon him"...⁶⁵

5. For the beasts of burden, their nutriment and their happiness is in eating, sleeping, and copulating. If you are of their kind, you try to satisfy your stomach and your genitals night and day. As for predatory beasts, their nutriment and their happiness is in giving free rein to tearing apart, killing, and rage. The nutriment of satanic forces is the encouragement of evil, treachery, and deceit. If you are of them, get busy in their activities and attain your ease and good fortune!

The intention in attaining good character, according to al-Ghazzali, is to develop angelic qualities to replace the satanic.

Know that the (spiritual) happiness of a human being is that one become of the nature of angels. For, one's essence is of them and one has come into this world a stranger. One's origin is the world of the angels. Every foreign characteristic that one bears from here distances one from being in conformity with (the angels). When going to that place, one must become of their character and not carry any attributes from this place.⁶⁶

The Quran gives references to what having a good character means:

Know that the signs of a good character are those which God Most High has described concerning the believers in the Quran in the first ten verses of the chapter beginning: *Successful indeed are the believers...* (Q. 23:1-10), and in the verse where He says: *Those who turn in repentance and those who serve (Him)...* (Q. 9:112), and in those verses where He says: *And the servants of the Compassionate are they who*

⁶⁵ Alchemy, pp. 459-60.

⁶⁶ Alchemy, p. 523.

walk upon the earth modestly to the end (of the chapter) (Q. 25:63-7).⁶⁷

Even with angelic qualities, one needs to keep to moderation in order to complete and perfect human nature according to al-Ghazzali:

In the same manner, all character has two aspects: one is praiseworthy and one is blameworthy. The objective is moderation. For example, we order the miser to give away wealth until it becomes easy for him, but not to the point of extravagance, for that is also blameworthy. But the scale for (weighing) that is from the Religious Law, just as the scale for (weighing) the treatment of the body is the science of medicine. He must become so that whatever the Law commands him to give, he gives, and its giving becomes easy for him and that there not be in him a demand to keep and hold on to (wealth). And whatever the Law commands him to keep, he should keep and the urge to give (of that) not be in him, so that he be moderate. Therefore, if those urges continue to appear in him—but he represses them by force—he is still ill. However, he is praiseworthy because he is indeed forcing himself to take his medicine and this compulsion is the way that (good character) will become natural to him.⁶⁸

Again, al-Ghazzali stresses moderation:

Any attribute that it is not possible for a person to eliminate should be kept at the (the level of) moderation, so that in one way it is as though it were eliminated. As water is not devoid of warmth or coldness, that which is tepid and equable resembles that which is devoid of both (extremes). Therefore, moderation and the mean in all qualities have been commanded because they are better.⁶⁹

Our angelic hosts of conscience and will power have to struggle against our animal soul. What fuel did God give for the armaments of the battle? What is the source of energy?

According to traditional psychology, energy in our liver undergoes successive processes of sublimation in our heart and brain. The purity of this energy and according to the function it performs as natural, vital, or nervous energy, serves a group of powers of nature in its mode of operation.

⁶⁷ Alchemy, p. 465.

⁶⁸ Alchemy, p. 459.

⁶⁹ Alchemy, p. 460.

Vegetal functions promote nutrition, growth, and reproduction. The nutritive function works by a number of subordinate systems: retention, digestion, assimilation, and expulsion. The energy for the vegetal functions originates in our liver where our humors are, as well so well known today to Chinese, Indian and ancient Greek methods of alternative medicine.

Our humors move by natural energy through the veins carrying sustenance to the body, performing the tasks of the vegetal systems. According to traditionalists such as Ibn Sina (Avicenna), we contain four humors:

Humor (*akhlāt*) or body fluid is that fluid, moist, physical substance into which our aliment is transformed. That part of the aliment which has the capacity to be transformed into a body substance, either by itself or in combination with something else, thereby being capable of assimilation by the members or organs and completely integrated into the tissues, is the healthy or good humor. It is what replaces the loss that the body substance undergoes.

Primary fluids are the sanguineous humor (blood), the serous humor (phlegm), the bilious humor (yellow bile) and the atrabilious humor (black bile).⁷⁰

THE SANGUINEOUS HUMOR

The nature [dynamic aspect] of the sanguineous humor is hot and moist in temperament. It may be normal or abnormal, conforming to its nature or not. Normal blood is red in color, sweet in taste and free from smell.⁷¹

THE SEROUS HUMOR

The nature of the serous humor is cold and moist in temperament. It may be normal or abnormal. Normal (sweet) serous humor can be transformed into blood at any time, as it is an imperfectly matured blood. It is a kind of sweet fluid that is only slightly colder than the body, but it is much colder than the bilious and blood humors.⁷²

⁷⁰ Avicenna. *Canon of Medicine*, pp 32-44. It is important for traditional psychologists to know that Avicenna's Canon of Medicine was translated into Latin not long after it was written. The Latin edition was the major medical textbook for 700 years in Europe.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

THE BILIOUS HUMOR

The bilious humor is the foam of blood. It is bright in color. It is light and pungent. The redder it is, the hotter it is. It is formed in the liver and then follows one of two courses: either it circulates with the blood, or it passes on to the gallbladder. The part which passes into the blood stream assists in two purposes. First of all, the portion which goes to the blood is essential for nutrition of organs such as the lungs. It makes the blood light and thin for easy passage through the narrow channels of the body. The portion that goes into the gallbladder is thus prevented, from vitiating the body and providing nutrition to the gallbladder. Its subsidiary functions are the cleansing of the intestine from the thick and viscid mucus and stimulation of the musculature of the intestine and rectum for proper defecation.⁷³

THE ATRABILIOUS HUMOR

Atrabilious humor is cold and dry in nature. There are natural and abnormal varieties.

Normal atrabilious humor is a sediment of the normal blood. It has a taste between sweetness and bitterness. After being formed in the liver, a part goes to the blood and another to the spleen.

The part which goes with the blood is essential for two purposes: the nutrition of organs such as the bones which have an appreciable quantity of the atrabilious bile in their composition, and to make the blood properly thick and heavy.

The portion which is in excess of these requirements is taken up by the spleen essentially for its own nutrition but also to save the blood from being damaged. The portion which goes from the spleen into the stomach serves the purpose of making the stomach strong and firm. It also stimulates the appetite by its sour taste.

This action of atrabilious humor is somewhat similar to that of the bilious humor. Just as the surplus of bile in the blood goes to the gallbladder, and the surplus from the gallbladder passes into the intestine, the excess of atrabilious humor from the blood goes to the spleen, what is left over from the spleen goes to the stomach to induce appetite. The surplus of bilious humor excites peristaltic movements and thus assists evacuation, but the surplus of atrabilious humor

⁷³ Ibid.

encourages the intake of food. So, blessed be God, the best of creators and the mightiest of rulers!⁷⁴

VITAL ENERGY OF THE HEART

Natural energy of the vegetal functions arises from blood in the liver. It passes with the humors through the veins to all parts of the body. Some natural energy and humors enter the cavity of the heart and through transformation there, becomes the vital energy, a substance less gross than that from the liver. Vital energies are carried to the organs of the body by our arteries. They make life possible. Vital energies are transformed in the brain where they become nervous energy. This makes perception and motivation to movement possible.

Vital energy of the sensitive functions arises from blood in the heart as transformed natural energy and move by way of the body through the arteries. The heart is the seat of life, of heat, of pulse, of the vital energies, and of nature in its mode of operation. It is the organ that lives first and dies last.

COGNITIVE VITAL AND NERVOUS ENERGIES RESPOND TO NATURAL DISPOSITIONS

Nervous energy arises in the brain from the vital energy reaching it from the heart. The brain is the center for motivation and perception. Motivation allows movement and perception consists of external and internal senses.

We have no control over these energies and how they are sent throughout the body except through what we eat and the air that we breathe. However, we can choose to become aware of our "self," in which case we would be forcing our "nervous energy" to be used for this purpose. This will serve to arm our angelic energies.

AWAKENING THE NATURAL DISPOSITION TO CONSCIOUSNESS OF SELF

Consciousness is developed through "reminders" or Signs that remind the self of its origin and of the nobility it gained when it received the infusion of the Divine Spirit, signified by human values. They include the knowledge that God is One, that truth, beauty, goodness, and love exist and are expressed in the original creation we try to imitate in response to a natural disposition to creativity, imitating the Original Creation.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Nothing happens without a source of energy. The more energy we have, the more vibrancy we have. While it is usually thought that if we eat better food, we will have more energy and this is true to some extent, there is also a qualitative energy that comes from spiritual practices which cannot be measured in the usual sense. Its presence can only be known through the resulting actions.

6. As for the angels, their nutriment and their happiness are the contemplation of the Divine Presence. They are immune from the lust, anger and the attributes of the beasts and predators. If you have the angelic essence in your nature, strive to come to know the Divine Presence and open yourself to the contemplation of Its Beauty. Liberate yourself from the grip of lust and anger. Strive until you understand the reason for the creation of these bestial traits within you. Were they created to capture you, to carry you into service of the self, and to enslave you in forced labor day and night? You must capture them before they capture you! You (must) make of one your vehicle and of the other your weapon for the journey that has been put before you. Use them in these few days that we are in this stopping place to hunt, with their aid, the seed of your own (spiritual) happiness.

We are generated out of the Divine Spirit and natural dispositions or "soul" of the mineral, plant, and animal forms, which have been guided by universal guidance. We may evolve the ability of consciousness through particular guidance if we will to do so. This enhances the actualization of conscience and will power as our own special natural disposition. Al-Ghazzali points out:

Know that a human being has been created of two things: one is the body, which can be seen with the physical eye. The other is the soul, which cannot be perceived except by the eye of the soul. For each one of these two, there is goodness and unseemliness. One is called the beauty of creation; the other, the beauty of disposition. Beauty of disposition consists of the inner form, just as beauty of creation consists of the outer form. As the outer form is not good if only the eyes are good, or only the mouth is good, or only the nose is good, so that the eyes, mouth, and nose together are not good and not suited to one another; in the same manner, the inner form is not good so long as four powers in it are not good: the power of reason, the power of anger, the power of the carnal appetite, and the power of preserving equilibrium among the other three.

As for the power of reason, by that we mean sagacity, the goodness of which is enough to easily distinguish between

truth and lies in speech, (between) the good and the unseemly in deeds, and between the true and the false in principles of belief. When this perfection has been achieved by the human soul, thence wisdom comes into being, the source of all kinds of happiness, as God Most High said: *And he unto whom wisdom is given, he hath truly received abundant good.* (Q. 2:269)

The goodness of the power of anger is that it be under the command of wisdom and the Religious Law and arise at their command and end at their command.

The goodness of the power of the carnal appetite is that it not be rebellious and that it be under the command of the Religious Law and reason so that its obedience to them may be easy for it.

The goodness of the power of preservation of the equilibrium is that it keep anger and passion subjugated to the direction of religion and reason.⁷⁵

Dispositions or states of being are both natural and acquired. Whether natural or acquired, either can be regulated by conscious or unconscious habits, habits being the continual repetition of certain acts.

Natural dispositions are never changed, in the sense that the original is lost, but rather, through nurturing, they can become hidden or concealed just as a mirror can lose its reflective capacity with the formation of rust, dust, or fog. The mirror is still there, but it reflects rust, dust, and fog rather than the its original, naturally disposed polished surface. Therefore, the natural disposition changes at the same time that it is always there and no energy is lost in the change. Al-Ghazzali explains further:

Know that God Most High has praised Mustafa (S) for his good disposition, saying: *And, lo! Thou art of a tremendous nature!* (Q. 68:4) And the Messenger (S) said: "I was sent to complete the excellences of character." And he (S) said: "The greatest thing placed in the scales is a good disposition."

Someone appeared before the Messenger (S) and asked: "What is religion?" He answered: "A good disposition." They came from the right and the left, asking (the same question again and again). He replied in the same way until at the last time he said: "Dost thou not know? That thou not anger." He (S) was asked: "What is the most virtuous of works?" He said: "A good disposition."

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "Give me some advice." He said: "Fear God Most High wherever thou mayst

⁷⁵ Alchemy, p. 452.

be." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "Do a good deed after every bad act in order to erase it." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "Mix with people good-naturedly." And he (S) said: "God Most High will not make whomever He has given a good disposition and a good appearance the food of fire."

And he (S) was told: "Such-and-such a woman fasts by day and spends her night in formal prayer, but has a bad disposition and her tongue afflicts her neighbors." He said: "Her place is in hell." And the Messenger (S) said: "A bad disposition ruins devotion as vinegar (ruins) honey."

And the Messenger (S) used to say as he made supplication: "O Lord God! Thou hast created my creation well; make my disposition also good." And he (S) used to say: "O Lord God! Grant (us) health, vigor, and a good disposition." The Messenger (S) was asked: "What is the best thing that God Most High gives His servant?" He answered: "A good disposition." And he (S) said: "A good disposition destroys sins as the sun (destroys) ice."⁷⁶

We are born with a natural disposition to meet physiological and psychological needs of the self. Psychological needs, which are part of the our natural disposition, are positive aspects of nature in its mode of operation trying to perfect our "self." These form the mirror of our "self." The nurturing process clouds, distorts, and darkens this mirror, thereby distancing us from our true nature. Change is effected through methods known as "polishing" or "purifying" the mirror of self so that it can once again reflect the positive aspects of our nature which we were naturally disposed by God (*fiṭrat*). Al-Ghazzali clarifies:

...Just as with outward beauty where extreme goodness and extreme unseemliness are not common and most fall in between, so it is with a good disposition. Therefore, every one must make an effort so that, even if one does not achieve perfection, one comes nearer to the degree of perfection. If all of one's character is not good, well, some parts or more of it will be good. As there is no limit to the differences between beauty and ugliness, the same is true of one's character.

This is the whole meaning of a good disposition. It is not one thing, nor ten, nor a hundred; for it is much more. However, it originates with the powers of knowledge, anger, passion, and a just equilibrium: the rest are branches of it.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Alchemy, pp. 450-51.

⁷⁷ Alchemy, p. 454.

Change, growth, and transformation in the traditional perspective do not mean that the natural disposition of reproduction or self-preservation should be repressed or suppressed because the human race could not exist without them. The point made in the traditions is that the mean and moderation, balance and equilibrium, are the norm so that all natural dispositions function properly.

Dispositions are described as "that which is the source of all of the actions that the self undertakes spontaneously without thinking about them." A natural disposition may be the result of natural and physical make-up by which we are endowed at birth with what is known physiologically as temperament. Temperament arises from the combination of elemental qualities of hot-wet, hot-dry, cold-wet, and cold-dry which develop depending on the constellation of birth, the geographic location of our parents at the time of the intercourse which leads to conception, of a mother during the time of pregnancy, the food that they eat, and the air that they breath. Even though temperament is natural, it can be changed, regulated, or neutralized as a disposition or psychological structure through moral healing and the centering process.

ATTITUDE: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE

A disposition that becomes embedded in the self is known as a trait or an attitude. In the traditional perspective, we are created pure and good and start life with a "clean slate," in the sense that we are free of negative traits and attitudes. Negative traits develop through contact with one's environment—parents, family, friends, schooling, work, and so forth. These traits are directly related to the way a person lives and thinks and are reinforced by one's words and deeds and concealed if negative resulting from the lack of nurturing guidance. Penetrating through our "self," traits or attitudes become the origin and cause of human actions.

When a negative disposition is reinforced through behavior, it becomes imbedded in us as a trait that requires greater conscious effort on the part of our cognitive system to undo. Al-Ghazzali describes our positive and negative traits:

The power of anger, should it become excessive, is called impetuosity; while if it is deficient, it is called cowardice and spiritlessness. When it is in balance—not too much or too little—it is called courage. Courage gives rise to nobility, high-mindedness, bravery, mildness, patience, moderation, control of anger, and characteristics like these. From impetuosity come boasting, vanity, conceit, recklessness, vainglory, throwing oneself into dangerous affairs, and the like. From its deficiency come self-abasement, helplessness, apprehension, fawning, and abjectness.

The power of the carnal appetite, should it become excessive, is called gluttony. From it, arise impudence, foulness, unmanliness, uncleanness, jealousy, being despised by the powerful, being contemptuous of the poor, and the like. If it is deficient, lethargy, dastardliness, and dishonor (come). When it is in balance, it is called chasteness. From it, come modesty, contentment, patience, tolerance, grace, wit, and approval.

Each one of these (powers) has two extremes that are condemned and unseemly, but the medium is good and praiseworthy. That medium, between those two extremes, is narrower than a hair. That medium is its Straight Path. It is as narrow as the Bridge of the Hereafter. Whoever walks straight upon this bridge, is sure to (cross) that (other) Bridge tomorrow (in safety).⁷⁸

The purpose of traditional psychology, then, is to first try to preserve the *fiṭrat* or natural dispositions of our self—which is called the healthy self—through the nurturing process.

One of the methods of both preservation of one's natural disposition or restoration back to it is self-training and conscious effort to adopt positive habits. It has been shown through centuries of experience that this will lead to a positive disposition and the stabilization of positive traits resulting in a healthy self. Traditional psychology and the methods of preservation of psychic health and/or its restoration when an imbalance occurs, basically deal with the development of traits that are slow to decline. We become centered when traits fall under the regulation of reason so that a positive disposition evolves.

The positive traits that indicate "centeredness" in traditional psychology develop out of the previous three systems: affective, behavioral, and cognitive. The positive disposition of the affective system is temperance. The positive disposition of the behavioral system is courage. The positive disposition of the cognitive intellect is wisdom. When these three positive dispositions are in balance, regulated by the conscious cognitive system, the fourth positive disposition is attained, that of justice. According to traditional psychology, fairness or justice is one of the natural dispositions of our free will. These are the positive traits, all of which appear in the Quran and the *Sunnah*. They are chosen as the "mothers of character" from among the many positive traits mentioned because of the central role they play in the analysis of our "self." They are distinguished by various functions therein. These four positive traits are also mentioned by Plato and Aristotle with a slight difference in values. They are accepted into the Islamic tradition by al-Ghazzali for two clear reasons: first of all, they are part of the Quran and

⁷⁸ Alchemy, p. 453.

the *Sunnah*; and secondly they can be arrived at through the observation of nature.

Therefore, these positive traits are part of the Signs of guidance and can be acquired by accepting particular guidance.

Al-Ghazzali operationalizes the positive traits:

The goodness of the power of anger is that it be under the command of wisdom and the Religious Law and arise at their command and end at their command.

The goodness of the power of the carnal appetite is that it not be rebellious and that it be under the command of the Religious Law and reason so that its obedience to them may be easy for it.

The goodness of the power of preservation of the equilibrium is that it keep anger and passion subjugated to the direction of religion and reason...

The power of knowledge, should it become excessive and involved in bad works, gives rise to deception and pedantry; while if it is deficient, it gives rise to foolishness and stupidity. However, when it is in balance, it gives rise to good planning, correct opinion, right thinking, and sound insight.⁷⁹

THE QURAN AND CENTERING THROUGH THE POSITIVE TRAITS

The Quran mentions these traits which bring about "centeredness" when they work together in balance and harmony giving equilibrium to the self. All four are referred to in one verse:

"Believers are those who believe in God and His Messenger; then they doubt not," a belief that is a consequence of reason and consciousness as the highest form of wisdom, *"and strive with their benefits in the Way of God,"* indicating temperance since this striving is only possible to be in the Way of God (nature/nurture or *takwīn/tashrīc* guidance) when the unconscious, affective/ emotive function is regulated by the rational, conscious belief in God and His Messenger, *"and strive with their lives in the Way of God,"* clearly referring to the behavioral function and courage since this positive trait is only possible of attainment in the Way of God when the preconscious, behavioral function is regulated by the rational, conscious belief in God and His Messenger; *"they are the truthful ones,"* the just. (Q. 49:15)

Each of the three positive traits: courage, temperance, and wisdom may develop as negative traits through an overdevelopment, or underdevelopment of one of the three functions of affect, behavior, or cognition.

⁷⁹ Alchemy, pp. 452, 453.

Al-Ghazzali counsels moderation and balance as previously mentioned:

It is for this that God Most High has ordained the middle way in all characteristics. He has forbidden both extremes, and gives punishment (for them), saying: *And those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor grudging; and there is a firm station between the two.* (Q. 25:67) He praised the person who does not skimp in spending, nor is extravagant, but stands between the two. And the Messenger (S) was told (by God): *And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck, nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.* (Q. 17:29) He said: "Do not tie up thy hand so as to give nothing, nor open it completely at one time and give away everything, lest thou be left without provisions and helpless."

So then, know that the absolutely good disposition is that in which all elements are balanced and correct within it, just as a beautiful countenance is that in which all of its parts are right and good.⁸⁰

And recommends methods of treatment:

Know that for whoever desires to expel his bad disposition from himself, there is only one way, and that is that he do the opposite of whatever that (bad) disposition commands him (to do). The carnal appetite cannot be subdued except by opposition. Everything is overcome by its contrary, just as the treatment of an illness that causes heat is the consumption of cold (foods). The treatment of every illness that arises from anger is patience. The treatment of whatever arises from arrogance is humility. The treatment of whatever arises from miserliness is giving away wealth. The same (rule) is valid for all...

There are some that are not affected by human choice, just as a one cannot grow an apple tree from the stone of a date; but one can grow a date palm with the nurture and care that it requires. In the same way, the roots of anger and carnal passion cannot be driven out of a human being. However, anger and carnal passion can be brought to the limit of moderation with discipline. This is made plain with experience. However, with respect to some people, it is more difficult. This difficulty arises for two reasons: one is that it has become stronger in the essence of one's innate nature, the

⁸⁰ Alchemy, pp. 453-4.

second is that one has been in obedience to it for a long time, to the point that one is mastered by it.⁸¹

7. When you have obtained that seed of happiness, place those (those tools) underfoot and turn your face to the resting place of your own (spiritual) happiness, that resting place for which the elite expression is the Divine Presence and for which the common expression is "Paradise."

There are those who never seek spiritual happiness. Al-Ghazzali gives reasons why:

Know that the reason for someone's not reaching God is that he has not traveled the path. The reason for someone's not traveling the path is that he has not sought it. The reason for someone's not seeking it is that he did not know, and his belief was incomplete. Indeed, the desire for the quest for the provisions of the Hereafter appears in whoever knows that the world causes misery and is but of a few days in duration, while the Hereafter is pure and everlasting. It is not a hardship for him to exchange something despicable for something valuable. Putting down the earthen jug so that tomorrow one will receive a golden jug is not very difficult.⁸²

He describes those who seek spiritual happiness:

...if the desire for God Most High appears in someone, and he is one of those about whom God Most High says: *And he who desires the Hereafter...* (Q. 17:19), he should know what the effort is when He continues: *...and strives for it with the effort necessary.* (Q. 17:19) Know that this effort is the traveling of the way! The traveler must first possess certain requisites that he has previously acquired; then, there is the document that he must hold firmly; then, there are a fortress and a castle that will give him refuge.⁸³

One attains to the Divine Presence by undertaking the greater struggle. Al-Ghazzali quotes the famous saying of the Prophet:

The Messenger (S) used to say to the Companions when they returned from battle in defence of religion: "Ye have come from the lesser striving to the greater striving." They asked: "What is that?" He answered: "The striving

⁸¹ Alchemy, pp. 456, 455.

⁸² Alchemy, p. 535.

⁸³ Alchemy, pp. 471-2.

against one's self." And the Messenger (S) said: "Restrain the torment of thyself from the self and do not give rein to its whims in disobedience to God Most High Who will judge thee tomorrow and curse thee until thy parts all curse one another."⁸⁴

According to the Prophet as quoted by al-Ghazzali in the Alchemy, the heart of all acts is our intention. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High does not look at your outward appearance and qualities; He looks at your heart and deeds." (His) looking at the heart is because it is the locus of intention. And the Messenger (S) said: "Deeds are according to intention." Every person receives from his act of worship that which is his intention for that.⁸⁵

Know that the learned religious scholars have said: "First learn the intention of the deed; then, the deed." Someone said: "Teach me an act that I may be engaged with night and day so that I not be devoid of good at any time." They said: "If thou canst not perform a good deed, then continually form good intentions so that the spiritual reward of that (unperformed deed) may be obtained."⁸⁶

Our intention, according to a Tradition of the Prophet is better than our deed. Al-Ghazzali explains what this means.

Know that the Messenger (S) has said: "*The intention of the believer is better than his deed.*" The Intention of the believer is better than his deed: he did not mean by this that an intention without the deed is better than a deed without the intention. For, this itself is not a secret, that a deed without the intention is not an act of worship, while an intention without the deed is an act of worship. Instead, the meaning is that one's devotion is with body and soul, and these are two parts. Of these two, that which is in the soul is better. The reason for this is that the aim of an act of the body (lasts) until the disposition of the soul changes. The aim of the intention and the act of the soul does not (just last) until the disposition of the body changes.

People imagine thus: that the intention is necessary for the deed, but the truth of the matter is that the deed must be for the intention. For the object of all is the moving about of

⁸⁴ Alchemy, p. 463.

⁸⁵ Alchemy, p. 799.

⁸⁶ Alchemy, p. 800.

the soul. It is the sojourner to the next world, and (eternal) happiness or misfortune will be its portion.⁸⁷

Intention needs to precede every act in order to have possible spiritual rewards. Without the intention, it is recorded—as good or bad depending on what the intention is—but without spiritual reward according to al-Ghazzali:

Know that there are three kinds of deeds: acts of devotion, sins, and the permitted.

(THE FIRST KIND: SINS.) It may be that because the Messenger (S) said: "*Verily deeds are according to intentions*," that a sin, with a good intention, can also be counted as an act of worship. This is an error. Rather, on this one kind, intention has no effect on it, but a bad intention makes it worse. It is like this: a person backbites in order to please the heart of someone; or he establishes a mosque, school, or retreat using unlawful wealth and says: "My intention is good." He does not know even this much: that it is not good because a resolution to do good with evil is another evil. If he understands all (of this), he is a sinner. If he does not know and imagines that this is good, he is also a sinner, for acquiring knowledge is a religious obligation. Most of mankind's perdition is from ignorance.

THE SECOND KIND: ACTS OF DEVOTION. In these, intention has two aspects with regard to effect: one is that its basis becomes correct with the intention; and the other is that however much the intention is increased, the spiritual reward is multiplied. Whoever acquires the knowledge (of making an) intention can make ten good intentions with one act of devotion, so that it becomes several acts of devotion. For example, when one goes into retreat in the mosque.

THE THIRD KIND IS THE PERMITTED, and let no rational being who wallows in the permitted like heedless beasts neglect a good intention, for that is a great loss because he will be questioned about all of (these acts) and there will be a reckoning concerning all of the permitted things. He will be held accountable if his intention is bad. And, if it be good, it will redound to him. Otherwise, it will be quits. But he will have wasted time and spent it in that in which there is no benefit for him, and he will have disobeyed this verse: *And forget not thy portion of the world and be thou kind even as God has been kind to thee.* (Q. 28:77) That is, the world is transitory. Take thy portion from it so that it stays with thee. The Messenger (S) said: "The servant of God will be asked about all that he has done, even to the amount of collyrium

⁸⁷ Alchemy, p. 802.

applied about the eyes, or the bit of earth rubbed with between fingers, or the hand placed upon the clothing of a brother.”⁸⁸

For anyone of us overcome by passion al-Ghazzali says the best way to discipline it is through undertaking the greater struggle.

Whoever is overcome by passion, that passion is one's object of worship. When this state becomes (one's) true nature, one must seek the discovery of affairs by earnest striving, not by argument.⁸⁹

8. All of these matters must be learned so that you may know a little about yourself. The prize of the Way of Religion (*al-dīn*) for whoever does not come to know these is like husks, and he is deprived of the true nature [and the best part] of Religion.

As mentioned before, *al-din* can be translated as “tradition” (not to be confused with the sayings and actions of the Prophet which are Tradition (*ḥadīth*) with a capital T).

Al-Ghazzali uses the concept of the spiritual heart sometimes to mean “mind” and sometimes “emotion.” Its meaning depends upon the context. He discusses it using his three fundamentals: knowledge, states and deeds.

KNOWLEDGE: THE HEART (SOUL)

The spiritual heart al-Ghazzali points out has to be turned away from this world to the next.

The turning about of the soul itself is not more than one thing: that it turn from this world to the Hereafter; rather, that it turn from this world and the Hereafter to God Most High. The direction of the soul does not precede its desire and inclination. When the desire for this world gains mastery over the soul, it turns to this world. Its attachment to this world is its desire and it was so at the beginning of creation. When the wishes of God Most High and of seeing the Hereafter dominate, its nature changes and it turns toward another direction.⁹⁰

The soundness of the heart according to al-Ghazzali is in its being the loving friend of our innate nature.

⁸⁸ Alchemy, pp. 807, 808-9.

⁸⁹ Alchemy, p. 473.

⁹⁰ Alchemy, pp. 803-4.

Know that just as the soundness of the body, hands, feet, and eyes lies in that each one of them be able to do completely that for which it was created—that the eye see well and the foot walk well; so the soundness of the soul lies in that the special quality, which is its original nature and for which it was created, be easy for it, and that it be the loving friend of that which is in its original nature.⁹¹

Knowledge is acquired through our spiritual heart (mind). The spiritual heart is the seat of the Intellect, source of faith and object of God's sight. Reference to the "spiritual" heart in the Quran and *Sunnah* refers to that aspect of "self" which comes to know the meaning or nature of things as al-Ghazzali points out:

Therefore, that amount of power is useful that is the means of acquiring knowledge. Knowledge is (acquired) by the application of the soul, not the body, and the soul endures and is everlasting. When a savant departs from this world, the knowledge remains (with him). That knowledge is his light by which he sees the Divine Presence so as to obtain the pleasure (in comparison) to which all of the other pleasures of Paradise fall short. Knowledge has no dependency upon anything that will be voided at death, for neither wealth nor the hearts of people are attached to knowledge. Rather, it is the essence of God Most High, His attributes, His wisdom in the dominion and the kingdom, and the wonders of the probabilities in the possible, the necessary, and the impossible. For, they are timeless and eternal. They never change because the necessary never becomes impossible; nor the impossible, possible. However, knowledge that is connected with created, transitory things has no weight, such as, for example, the knowledge of language. For language is created and transitory, its weight is that it is the means of knowing the Book and the Practice (of the Prophet). Knowing the Book and the Practice is knowing God Most High and the cutting away of the obstacles on the path to Him.⁹²

STATES: THE HEART (SOUL)

...the heart has been so created that when an inclination or desire appears in it, when the body rises in agreement with that, that quality becomes more firmly and strongly established in the heart. For example, when mercy for

⁹¹ Alchemy, p. 461.

⁹² Alchemy, p. 597.

the orphan appears in the heart, if the hand is placed upon (the orphan's) head, that mercy grows stronger and the awareness of the heart increases. When the reality of humility appears, one acts humbly with the head too, and it approaches the ground. The intention of all acts of worship and the desire for the good is not that one turn to the world, but to the Hereafter.⁹³

...God Most High is the nourishment of the soul, just as food is the nourishment of the body. A body from which the craving for food has departed or in which it has grown weak is sick. A soul from which the love for God Most High has departed, or in which it has grown weak, is sick. It is for this that God Most High said: *Say: If your fathers and your sons...* (Q. 9:24)⁹⁴

Al-Ghazzali says that the defects of the heart can be recognized in four ways:

One is that one resort to an experienced and mature spiritual guide so that that spiritual guide may examine him and disclose the person's defects to him. In this era, this is unusual and rare.

The second is that one have a sympathetic friend watch over oneself, one who will not conceal one's defects out of flattery, nor magnify them out of envy. This, too, is rare. Dawud Tayi (R) was asked: "Why dost thou not associate and mix with people?" He replied: "What is the point of associating with a people who see my faults and conceal them from me?"

The third is that one listen to the talk of one's enemies about oneself, for the eye of the enemy always falls upon the faults. Even if he exaggerates out of his enmity, his words are still not devoid of truth.

The fourth is that one should study people. One should constantly be on the watch for any defect in oneself that one sees in someone else. One should suspect one's self, for it may be the same.⁹⁵

DEEDS: HEART (SOUL)

Therefore, the aim of all deeds is the turning of the soul. The aim of prostration is not that the forehead turn in order to touch from the air to the ground. Rather, it is that the nature of the soul turns from passion and arrogance to

⁹³ Alchemy, p. 803.

⁹⁴ Alchemy, p. 461-2.

⁹⁵ Alchemy, p. 462.

humility. The purpose of (uttering) *God is Greater* is not that the tongue twist and flick about. Rather, it is that the nature of the soul should turn from glorification of the self to the glorification of God Most High. The purpose of casting stones during the Greater Pilgrimage is not to increase the number of stones at a particular spot or to exercise the arm. Rather, is that the soul stand firm upon its servitude (of God) and abandon the pursuit of appetite and the control of one's own intellect, and become obedient to (God's) command. He removes the reins from his own hand and surrenders them to the hand of (God's) command. As he says: "*At Thy service, in proof of Truth, in worship and as a slave.*" The purpose of the sacrifice is not that a sheep be killed. Rather, it is that the foulness of miserliness depart from thy breast. Thou dost not have compassion for animals because of thy nature, but thou hast it because of the command (of God). When it is said: "Slaughter this sheep!" thou dost not say: "What has this wretch done? Why should I punish it?" Rather, thou abandonest thy self and, in truth, become non-existent. For, the servant (of God) is non-existent with respect to himself and he is truly intoxicated with God. All acts of worship are like this...⁹⁶

Deeds (performed) with that intention become established and confirmed. Consequently, the deed is for the confirmation of the desire and the intention, even if it also comes from the intention. When it is so, it is obvious that intention is superior to the deed, for the intention itself is in the soul itself while the deed will flow from another place to the soul. If (the deed) does (this), it is useful, but if it does not, and it is done heedlessly, it is futile. The intention without the deed is this; it is not futile. This is just as if there were a pain in the stomach. When one takes medicine and it reaches (the belly), the object is attained. If one smears it on the chest so that its effect reaches it, it is also beneficial, but it would be better if it reached the stomach directly. The object of that ointment which touches the chest is not the chest but the stomach. It will necessarily be futile if it does not spread to the stomach. That which reaches the stomach, even though it does not reach the chest, will not be futile...⁹⁷

ONE is to constantly repeat "God! God!" (*Allāh! Allāh!*), with the soul (*heart*), not with the tongue. Indeed, one should not (even) say it with the soul, for this uttering is like talking to oneself. Rather, one must be continually in a state of witnessing so as never to be inattentive. However, this is very impracticable and difficult. Not everyone has the strength for this—that one's soul have a single quality and a

⁹⁶ Alchemy, p. 803.

⁹⁷ Alchemy, p. 803-4.

single state—for people become bored with doing this. For this reason, many different private devotions have been posited. Some have a fixed form, such as formal prayer, and some are oral, such as reading the Quran and the Glorification; others are with the soul, such as meditation and reflection—lest one become bored. So, at every moment, there is something different to do; in the change from one state to another, there is a rest...⁹⁸

Know that God Most High has a secret in the human soul. It is hidden in it just as fire in iron. When a stone is struck on iron, the secret (fire) is made manifest and plain. In the same way, listening to fine music and rhythmic song excites that essence of the soul. Something appears in it without a person's having any choice about it. The reason for this is the relationship that the essence of every human being has with the World of the Sublime: that which is called the world of spirits. The World of the Sublime is the world of excellence and beauty; the root of excellence and beauty is proportion. Whatever is in proportion gives proof of the beauty of that world. For, every beauty, excellence, and proportionality that is perceived in this world is all the fruit of the beauty, excellence and proportionality of that world.

Therefore, a sweet, rhythmic, proportioned song also has a resemblance to the marvels of that world. Because of this, awareness is awakened in the soul. A movement—a yearning—is born that the (listener) himself may not understand what it is. This is in a soul that is simple and devoid of being affected by passion and yearning. However, if it is not empty and is occupied with something, that with which it is occupied starts to move and brighten, as does a flame when it is breathed upon.

For the person whose soul has been conquered by the fire of the love of God Most High, music is important, for it makes that fire burn hotter. However, for anyone whose soul harbors love for the false, music is fatal poison for him and is forbidden to him.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ *Alchemy*, p. 221.

⁹⁹ *Alchemy*, p. 392.

EPILOGUE

Al-Ghazzali died on Monday the 14th of Jumādā Thānī AH505 (December 18, 1111), at the age of fifty-three. Margaret Smith in *Al-Ghazzali the Mystic* relates what took place on the days after his death according to his brother Ahmad.

At dawn of the day of his death, al-Ghazzali performed his ablutions and prayed and then said to his brother, "Bring me my shroud." and taking it, he kissed it and laid it over his eyes and said, "Most gladly do I enter into the Presence of the King," and he stretched out his feet and went forth to meet Him, and so passed into the Paradise of God, "worthy of all honor, of loftier station than the stars, giving more guidance to men than the full moon when darkness has fallen." He was buried outside Tus in a grave near that of the poet Firdousi. Ibn al-Samani records that he visited al-Ghazzali's grave there.

There is a story to the effect that when al-Ghazzali fell ill and felt that his death was approaching, he sent away those who were with him. No one entered his presence until the next morning when they went in as he had bidden them. They found him facing the qiblah, clad in his shroud, dead, and at his head they found a sheet of paper bearing these verses:

Say to my friends when they look upon me dead
Weeping for me and mourning me in sorrow
Do not believe that this corpse you see is myself.
In the Name of God I tell you it is not I
I am a spirit and this is nothing but flesh
It was my abode and my garment for a time.
I am a treasure, by a talisman kept hid,
Fashioned of dust which served me as a shrine.
I am a pearl which has left its shell deserted
It was my prison where I spent my time in grief.
I am a bird and this body was my cage
Whence I have now flown forth and it is left as a token,
Praise be to God Who has now set me free
And prepared for me my place in the highest of the heavens.
Now I live in truth with the grave-clothes discarded.
Today I hold converse with the saints above.
Now with no veil between I see God face to face
I look upon the Tablet (*al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz*) and therein I read
Whatever was and is and all that is to be.
Let my house fall in ruins. Lay my cage in the ground.
Cast away the talisman. It is a token, no more.

Lay aside my cloak. It was but my outer garment.
 Place them all in the grave. Let them be forgotten.
 I have passed on my way and you are left behind.
 Your place of abode was no dwelling-place for me.
 Think not that death is death. Nay, it is life,
 A life that surpasses all we could dream of here.
 While in this world we are granted sleep.
 Death is but sleep, a sleep that shall be prolonged.
 Be not afraid when death draws near.
 It is but the departure for this blessed home.
 Think of the mercy and love of your Lord.
 Give thanks for His Grace and come without fear.
 What I am now even so shall you be
 For I know that you are even as I am.
 The souls of all people come forth from God.
 The bodies of all are compounded alike.
 Good and evil alike it was ours.
 I give you now a message of good cheer.
 May God's peace and joy for evermore be yours.

There were many elegies composed in honor of al-Ghazzali after his death. The most famous was that of the poet Abu'l-Muzaffer al-Abiwardi (d. 507/1113). Imam Ismail al-Hakimi also express his grief in lines taken from one of the most celebrated qasidas of Abu Tammam:

I wondered how to endure it when deprived of him by death.
 I who shed tears of blood when he was away from me.
 But these are times when so much seems strange
 That we have ceased to wonder thereat.

One of al-Ghazzali's pupils, the well-known Sufi Abu'l Abbas al-Alishi composed verses in praise of both his teacher and his teacher's masterpiece, the *Ihya*.

It is related that just after al-Ghazzali's death, Abu'l Abbas Ahmad ibn Abi al-Khayr al-Yamani, known as Sayyad, had a vision. He was sitting at the open gates of heaven and lo, a band of angels were descending to the earth bearing robes of honor, green in color, and with them a noble steed. They alighted at the head of a certain tomb and brought one forth from his grave. Having invested him with the robes, they set him on that steed and ascended with him to the heavens, continuing to ascend with him from one heaven to another until he had passed through all the seven heavens and ascending beyond them, he traversed the seventy veils. "I was filled with wonder at that," said Abu'l-Abbas, "and I desired to know who that rider was and I was told: 'It is al-Ghazzali,' and I did not know then that he had attained to martyrdom." It

is said that al-Ghazzali occupied the position of *qutb*, the supreme head of the mystical hierarchy.

It is also related that someone saw al-Ghazzali after his death in a dream and asked about his state. He replied, "If it were not for this strange knowledge, all would be well with us." His biographer is anxious that no one should imagine that this strange knowledge should be interpreted to mean the mystical knowledge of al-Ghazzali. This, he holds, would be a satanic device to prevent others from following in al-Ghazzali's steps and would mean that they were veiled from God and hindered from attaining to the highest degree of sainthood. He interprets the words to mean that since it was a celestial vision of one now in the Presence of God, no longer concerned with the things of sense, the strange knowledge was that which was concerned only with this world, with human affairs and relationships which could have no bearing whatever on life in the world to come, for death means separation from them. So perhaps al-Ghazzali regretted having concerned himself with worldly knowledge which was strange to the heavenly places. But his biographer points out that the knowledge of the mysteries of decoction and what belongs to the world to come could not be strange to one who had attained to that world. Therefore he urges his readers not to misinterpret these words lest they be hindered from seeking spiritual knowledge, but to acquire worldly knowledge only as much as was really necessary.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ *Al-Ghazzali the Mystic*, pp. 36-38.

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THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

GHAZZALI'S FOREWORD TO HIS BOOK

*In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate
Thee do we ask for help*

Abundant gratitude and thanks, in the number of the stars in the sky, the droplets of the rain, the leaves of the trees, the grains of sand in the desert, and the particles of the earth and the sky, to that God Whose attribute is Oneness, and Whose special nature is Majesty and Grandeur, Greatness and Superiority, and Glory and Goodness. No created being is cognizant of the perfection of His Majesty. No one other than He may penetrate the true reality of His knowledge; indeed, the declaration of our inability to do so is the limit of the knowledge of the truly righteous.¹⁰¹ The confession of (their) shortcomings in praising and appreciating Him is the furthest limit of the angels' and the prophets' appreciation of Him.

The farthest limit (achieved by) human reason through the principles of the Illumination¹⁰² of His sublimity is bewilderment. The ultimate end of the journey of the wayfarers and disciples in their search for proximity to His awesome beauty is astonishment. Abandoning hope in the principle of (striving for) the knowledge of Him is the denial of His attributes¹⁰³ while the claim to a perfect knowledge of Him is the imagining of a similitude¹⁰⁴ and a likening.¹⁰⁵ The portion for all the eyes that would gaze upon the beauty of His essence is bedazzlement, and the fruit of the contemplation of the wonders of His creation to all intellects is necessary knowledge.

Let no one reflect upon the Nature and the What of the vastness of His essence! Let no heart neglect for one moment the wonders of His creation and (question) the nature and origin of His existence, so that one necessarily recognizes that all are the signs of His power and the lights of

¹⁰¹ "truly righteous": *ṣiddiqān*.

¹⁰² "Illumination" (*Ishrāq*): Probably a jab at the Neoplatonic philosophy of Illuminism (*Ishrāq*) which Ghazzali rejected.

¹⁰³ "denial of His attributes" (*taʿṭīl*): a theological concept denying God all attributes.

¹⁰⁴ "similitude" (*tashbīh*) which, theologically, is the anthropomorphization of God. (Wehr)

¹⁰⁵ "likening" (*tamthīl*): the root meaning is: "to resemble, to look like, to appear in the likeness of," and a derivative is used in the Quran with the English equivalent of "similitudes."

His grandeur. All these are the inventions and marvels of His wisdom. All are the rays of the beauty of His presence. All are His; indeed, the existence of all things is (but) a ray of the light of His existence.

Praise be to Muhammad the Chosen One, upon whom be the peace and blessings of God, who is the lord of the prophets and the guide and the way for the believers. He is the trustee of the secrets of divinity, chosen and selected by the Divine Presence; and (praise be) to his helpers and the people of his house, each one of whom is a model for the nation and a discloser of the Way of the Religious Law.

Now, know that mankind was not created frivolously or upon a whim; instead, his role is grand and his peril is great. Though man is not eternal and does not live forever, though his body is earth and clay, the truth of his soul is exalted and divine. His essence—though it is mixed and permeated in the beginning with bestial, wild, and devilish characteristics—is cleansed of these impurities and becomes fit for the Divine Presence when he strives to repent.

From the lowest of the low to the highest of the high, all the dips and rises are (man's) work. The lowest of the low is he who descends to the level of beasts, ferocious animals, and devils. He is the prisoner of his carnal appetite and anger. The highest of the high is he who attains the level of the angels and is liberated from his carnal appetite and anger. Both of them (appetite and anger) become his prisoners and he their ruler. When he attains such sovereignty, he becomes worthy of service to the Divine Presence, and such worthiness is the attribute of the angels and the perfection of the state of man. When he enjoys the pleasure of the beauty of the Divine Presence, he will not be able to withhold himself from its contemplation for one moment. Gazing upon that beauty becomes his heaven. That "heaven" which is the result of the appetite of the eyes, the genitals, and the stomach will be abridged for him.

Since the essence of man is, at the outset of creation, deficient and base, it is not possible for him to attain the stage of perfection from this deficiency without strenuous effort and treatment.

EXCURSUS: (ABOUT ALCHEMY)

Just as that alchemy¹⁰⁶ that transforms copper and bronze to the purity and beauty of pure gold is difficult and not known by everyone; so

¹⁰⁶ "Alchemy" (*kīmiyā*): This word which, in Arabic, was a loan word from the Greek *chemeia*, itself meaning 'alchemy' rather than our modern concept of 'chemistry' which was also derived from it, albeit, through 'alchemy.' The first syllable *al* is the Arabic definite article ('the') and shows that the English word came not directly from the Greek, but by way of Arabic *al-kīmiyā* (through Latin). While in English, alchemy refers to the process of converting base metal into something more valuable, usually gold, in Arabic

too the alchemy that will transform the essence of man from his baseness and bestiality to the purity and preciousness of the angelic state in order to achieve everlasting happiness is also difficult and not known by all. The purpose of this book is to describe the compounding of this alchemy which, in truth, is the alchemy of eternal (spiritual) happiness. With this in mind, I have named this book *The Alchemy of Happiness*.

The noun *Alchemy* is preferred because the difference between copper and gold lies not in yellowness and the reward of this alchemy is nothing more than (mere) wealth in this world. How long does this world itself last? How great is the difference between bestial and angelic attributes, from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high? But, the fruit of this *Alchemy of Happiness* is eternal; there is no limit to it! Its varieties of pleasure have no end, nor shall any annoyance tarnish its pleasure.

Know that the philosopher's stone¹⁰⁷ (of the alchemist) is not to be found in any old woman's cupboard; rather it is found in the treasury of kings. So, too, the alchemy of happiness is not everywhere; it is in the Divine Treasury. And the Treasury of God is the essence of the angels in the heavens and the hearts of the prophets on earth. So, whoever, other than the noble prophets, seeks to achieve this alchemy is in error. In the season of the Resurrection, his insolvency will be disclosed and his false coinage made public. His imaginings will disgrace him, and it will be said to him: *Now We have removed from thee thy covering and piercing is thy sight this day.* (Q 50:22)

Of the greatest of the mercies of God Most High, one is that He sent 124,000 prophets to mankind for this purpose: to teach them the formula of this alchemy and to inform them how to place the soul (*dil*) in the crucible of striving, and how to cleanse from it the immoral characteristics from which come the wickedness and tarnishing of the soul, and how to draw the praiseworthy attributes to it. It was for this, as God Most High himself gloried in His Own sovereignty and purity, that He further glorified (Himself) by sending the prophets, may God bless them all. And He tasked them, saying:

All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifieth God, the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, the Mighty, the Wise. It is He Who hath sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own, to recite unto them His revelations and to purify them, and to teach them

kimiyā refers both to the process and the mysterious substance called the lodestone or philosopher's stone which was thought to be the agent of this transformation. Hence, Ghazzali uses the word in both meanings: it is a process *and* it is also a coveted substance, the vain search for which in medieval laboratories throughout the East and West ultimately gave birth to the science of modern chemistry.

¹⁰⁷ "philosopher's stone": also *kimiyā*.

the Book and Wisdom, though before (this) they were indeed in manifest error. (Q. 62:1-2)

This *purifying them* is to cleanse them of the unbecoming traits that are the attributes of brutish beasts. *Teaching them the Book and Wisdom* is that mankind be clothed in the raiment of angelic attributes.

The object of this alchemy is to strip away all that should not be (the attributes of deficiency); and to adorn (a person) with what should be (the attributes of perfection). The secret of this alchemy is that one must turn away from this world and bring oneself to God Most High, as He first taught the Prophet (S), saying: *Remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him, a great devotion.* (Q. 73:8) The meaning of *devotion* is to cut oneself off from all else and give one's self to Him in its entirety.

In short, this alchemy is that, but its explanation is lengthy.

THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK

As for (the *Alchemy's*) Prolegomena,¹⁰⁸ it is about the knowledge of four things; and its Pillars¹⁰⁹ are the four forms of conduct. For each Pillar, there are ten Chapters, as is found in the Contents: four Topics, four Pillars, and (each Pillar having) ten Chapters. [All of this book and its contents are what has been cited, *should God Most High will it!*]

THE PROLEGOMENA ON BEING A MUSLIM

The First Topic: That is to know the true nature of oneself.

The Second Topic: That is to know God.

The Third Topic: That is to know the true nature of the world.

The Fourth Topic: That is to know the true nature of the afterlife.

[And these four studies are in fact (the knowledge of) being a Muslim.]

THE (FOUR) PILLARS OF BEING A MUSLIM

These Pillars of Being a Muslim are [divided into] four: Two concerning externals, and two concerning internals. The two Pillars concerning externals are: the First Pillar, the execution of God's commandments, and this is called the *Acts of Worship*. The Second Pillar

¹⁰⁸ Prolegomena (*ʿunwān*): In modern Persian, *ʿunwān* (pronounced *unvān*) usually refers to address or title. Construed with a verb such as *kardan* (to do), it can mean to bring up a matter or a topic. In Arabic, it can also mean a model, epitome, token, etc. Ghazzali appears to be using the word as a classification and for this reason has been translated here as "topic." The four topics, taken together, constitute the Prolegomena.

¹⁰⁹ "Pillar": *rukn*, pl. *arkān*.

is about observing proprieties in movement and rest and in social intercourse, which is called *Mutual Relations*.

As for the two Pillars concerning internals, the first [the Third Pillar] is about the cleansing of the heart of immoral traits, such as anger, miserliness, envy, pride, and conceit. These traits are called the Destroyers and obstacles on the road of faith. The other Pillar [the Fourth Pillar] is the adornment of the heart with desirable traits, such as patience, gratitude, love, hope, and trust (in God). They are called the Deliverers.

THE FIRST PILLAR IS ABOUT THE ACTS OF WORSHIP AND HAS TEN CHAPTERS. The first chapter: making right the beliefs of the orthodox¹¹⁰ and the congregation; the second chapter: engaging in the search for knowledge; the third chapter: concerning purification; the fourth chapter: concerning performing formal prayer; the fifth chapter: concerning the poor rate; the sixth chapter: concerning fasting; the seventh chapter: concerning performing the greater Pilgrimage; the eighth chapter: concerning the recitation of the Quran; the ninth chapter: concerning the Remembrance of God and Glorifying Him; and the tenth chapter: observing the formulae and the times of worship¹¹¹ correctly.

THE SECOND PILLAR IS ABOUT MUTUAL RELATIONS AND ALSO HAS TEN CHAPTERS. The first chapter: the rules of eating; the second chapter: the rules of marriage; the third chapter: the rules of business and trade; the fourth chapter: concerning seeking the lawful; the fifth chapter: the rules of social intercourse; the sixth chapter: the rules of seclusion; the seventh chapter: the rules of travel; the eighth chapter: the rules of the whirling dance; and ecstasy; the ninth chapter: the rules of enjoining the good and prohibiting the bad; and the tenth chapter: the rules of governing.

THE THIRD PILLAR IS ABOUT OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES ON THE ROAD OF FAITH, WHICH ARE CALLED THE DESTROYERS, AND ALSO HAS TEN CHAPTERS. The first chapter: concerning the disclosure of the discipline of the self, the treatment for bad character, and the obtaining of a good character; the second chapter: concerning the appetites of the stomach and the genitalia; the third chapter: concerning the remedy for bad language and the calamities (resulting from) speech; the fourth chapter: concerning treating the diseases of anger, hatred, and envy; the fifth chapter: concerning the love of this world and the sickness of greed; the sixth chapter: concerning the

¹¹⁰ "orthodox": *ahl-i sunnat*.

¹¹¹ See Chapter Ten of the First Pillar and Note 625.

treatment of stinginess and avarice for the accumulation of wealth; the seventh chapter: concerning the treatment of the love for high rank and pomp and its evils; the eighth chapter: concerning the treatment of hypocrisy and sowing discord in worship; the ninth chapter: concerning the treatment of arrogance and conceit; and the tenth chapter: concerning the treatment of heedlessness, error, and pride.

THE FOURTH PILLAR IS ABOUT THE *DELIVERERS* AND ALSO HAS TEN CHAPTERS. The first chapter: concerning repentance and emerging from darkness; the second chapter: concerning patience and thankfulness; the third chapter: concerning fear and hope; the fourth chapter: concerning dervishhood and asceticism; the fifth chapter: concerning truthfulness and sincerity; the sixth chapter: concerning reckoning and guarding; the seventh chapter: concerning meditation; the eighth chapter: concerning (Divine) Unity and trust (in God); the ninth chapter: concerning love and zeal; and the tenth chapter: concerning the remembrance of death.

In this work, we explain these four topics and the forty points for Persian speakers. We have refrained from penning long, abstruse phrases and fine, difficult distinctions so that the general public may comprehend it. Should a person have the desire for more detailed and refined information about this, he must consult books in Arabic, such as *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*, *The Essentials of the Quran*,¹¹² and other works that we have written about these matters in Arabic. The object of this book is the general public, who have cried for such a book in Persian. The level of discourse must not exceed their ability to understand.

May God Most High purify their intention in their earnest request and our intention in complying with it. May He [bless us with favor and] keep it pure from the pitfalls of hypocrisy and the offense of dissimulation. May He open wide the hope of His mercy and the right path. May He grant facility and success so that that which is said becomes faithful to behavior, for words without action are a waste and declaring without practicing will be a cause of trouble in the Hereafter. *We seek refuge with God from that.*¹¹³

¹¹² *The Essentials* (or *Jewels*) of the *Quran* (*Jawāhir al-Qurʿān*): In his list of 72 works of Ghazzali, HK places this work at No. 37 between *The Revival* (No. 28) and *The Alchemy* (No. 45).

¹¹³ Instead of: *We seek refuge with God from that*, AA has: *Verily, He is the Lord of Compliance*.

THE BEGINNING OF THE BOOK DISCLOSING THE PROLEGOMENA TO BEING A MUSLIM

THE FIRST TOPIC: CONCERNING KNOWING ONESELF

Know that the key to the knowledge of God, may He be honored and glorified, is knowledge of one's own self. For this it has been said: *He who knows himself knows his Lord.* And it is for this that the Creator Most High said: *We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves, so that it will become evident to them that it is the Truth.* (Q. 41:53) He said: We show them Our signs in the universe and in (their) selves so that the true nature of the Truth may become revealed to them.

In a word, there is nothing closer thee than thou.¹¹⁴ If thou knowest not thyself, how canst thou know anything else? Indeed, if thou sayest thou knowest thyself, thou art in grievous error! Thou knowest nothing more about thyself than thy head, face, hands, feet, flesh, and external skin! All thou knowest about thine insides is that when thou art hungry thou must eat; when thou anger, thou fighest; when (sexual) appetite overcomes thee, thou seekest to copulate. In this, thou art the equal of the beasts of burden!

Therefore, thou must seek out the truth about thyself: What sort of a thing art thou? Whence camest thou? Whither goest thou? Why hast thou come to this stopping place?¹¹⁵ For what purpose wert thou created? What is thy happiness and in what does it lie? What is thy misery and in what does that lie?

As for those attributes that are gathered inside thee: some are the attributes of beasts of burden, some are the attributes of fierce animals, some are the attributes of demons, and some are the attributes of the angels. Which of these art thou? Which is the truth of thine essential nature, while the others are foreign and borrowed? If thou dost not know this, thou canst not seek thine own happiness, because for each of these there is a different nutriment and a different happiness.

For the beasts of burden, their nutriment and their happiness is in eating, sleeping, and copulating. If thou art are of their kind, thou triest to satisfy thy stomach and thy genitalia night and day. As for ferocious beasts, their nutriment and their happiness is in giving free rein to tearing

¹¹⁴ The reader himself is being addressed (*tū* = thou).

¹¹⁵ "this stopping place" (*manzil-gāh*): this world.

apart, killing, and rage. The nutriment of demons is the encouragement of evil, treachery, and deceit. If thou art of them, busy thyself in their activities and attain thine ease and good fortune!

As for the angels, their nutriment and their happiness is the contemplation of the Divine Presence. They are immune from the appetite, anger and the attributes of the beasts and predators. If thou hast the angelic essence in thy nature, strive to come to know the Divine Presence and open thyself to the contemplation of Its Beauty. Liberate thyself from the grip of carnal appetite and rage. Strive until thou dost understand the reason for the creation of these bestial traits within thee. Were they created to capture thee, to carry thee into service of the self, and to enslave thee in forced labor, day and night? Thou must capture them before they capture thee! Thou (must) make of one thy vehicle and of the other thy weapon for the journey that has been put before thee. Use them in these few days that we are in this stopping place to hunt, with their aid, the seed of thine own (spiritual) happiness.

When thou hast obtained that seed of happiness, place those (those tools) underfoot and turn thy face to the resting place) of thine own (spiritual) happiness, that resting place for which the elite expression is "the Divine Presence"¹¹⁶ and for which the common expression is "Paradise."

All of these matters must be learned so that thou may know a little about thyself. The prize of the Way of Religion for whoever does not come to know these is an (empty) shell, and he is deprived of the true nature [and the best part]¹¹⁷ of Religion.

1. THE OUTER FORM AND THE INNER SPIRIT

If thou desirest to know thyself, know that thou wert created of two things. One is the external form that is called the body and is visible to the eye; the other is the internal spirit that is called the self (*nafs*),¹¹⁸ the vital principle (*jān*),¹¹⁹ or the soul (*dil*).¹²⁰ It may be known by means of inner vision, but it cannot be seen by the external eye.

¹¹⁶ "the Divine Presence" (*ḥaḍrat-i ulūhiyat*): literally, the presence of the Godhead.

¹¹⁷ From the AA text.

¹¹⁸ "self" (*nafs*): Though it can mean soul or spirit, it is more often used in philosophy to represent the perishable aspect of our spiritual being. It represents our individuality and inclinations, something like the modern ideas of self and ego. The various terms Ghazzali uses for aspects of the soul are inserted into the text throughout the Prolegomena only.

¹¹⁹ "vital principle" (*jān*): Life. The animating spirit which vanishes at death. It also contains meanings of soul and feeling, a Persian rough equivalent of Arabic *nafs*.

¹²⁰ *Dil*: literally "heart." As in English, "heart" can refer to the center of abstract feeling and also to the physical organ in our chests. In addition to using it in these senses, Ghazzali also uses it as the Persian equivalent of Arabic *rūḥ*, meaning the eternal aspect of our spirituality: the soul.

Thy true nature¹²¹ lies in that internal spirit. Everything else other than that is its follower, its army, and its servant. We call it the soul (*dil*). When we speak of this soul, know that we refer to that true nature which is also sometimes called the (eternal) spirit (*rūh*)¹²² and at other times the self (*nafs*). We are referring to this "soul," not to the lump of flesh¹²³ that is found in the left side of the chest. It has no special merit and is possessed also by the beasts, the dead, and can be seen by the external eye. Everything that can be seen by the eye is of this world, called "the visible world."¹²⁴

The true nature of the soul is not of this world. It has come to this world as a stranger and a wayfarer. The external flesh is its vehicle and tool, and all the limbs and organs of the body are its soldiers. It is the monarch of the entire body. (Spiritual) knowledge of God Most High and the witnessing the beauty of His Presence are its attributes. It has the burden of duty, it is addressed, and it is chastised and punished. Unalloyed happiness and misery are its (lot). In all of this, the body is its follower. Knowledge of its true nature and its attributes is the key to spiritual knowledge of God Most High.

Strive to get to know it, for it is a precious jewel, of the essence of the angels. Its real source¹²⁵ is the Divine Presence, whence it has come and whither it shall return. It has come here as a visitor to trade and sow. After this, thou wilt come to understand the meaning of this "trading and sowing," *God willing*.

2. KNOWING THE TRUE NATURE OF THE SOUL

Know that knowledge of the true nature of the soul is not acquired until thou recognize its existence. After that, thou comest to know what its true nature is. Then, thou comest to know how many its armies are. Then, thou comest to know its relationship to those armies. Then, thou comest to know its character: how it obtains the knowledge of God Most High and how it obtains its own (spiritual) happiness. Each one of these will be discussed.

Now, (the soul's) existence is obvious; for a person has no doubt about the existence of himself. One's existence does not lie in the visible body; a corpse possesses the same, but it does not have life.

When we speak of this soul (*dil*), we mean the true nature of the eternal spirit (*rūh*). If there is no soul, the body is a corpse. If a person closes his eyes and forgets about his body and forgets the heavens and

¹²¹ "true nature": *ḥaqīqat*.

¹²² See Notes 118, 119, and 120.

¹²³ That is, the physical heart.

¹²⁴ Or "world of witnessing" (*ʿālam-i shahādat*).

¹²⁵ "source" (*maʿdan*): literally "mine, quarry."

the earth and all else that the external eye can see, he will come to know his own existence out of necessity and become aware of himself, even though he is unaware of his form and the earth and the sky and all that is in them.¹²⁶ When a person reflects well upon this, he will come to know something of the afterlife. He will perceive that his physical shape will be taken away from him, yet he will remain in place and not be annihilated.

3. THE TRUE NATURE OF THE SOUL

As for the true nature of the soul, that is, what sort of thing it is and what its special attributes are, the Religious Law¹²⁷ has given no leniency. It was for this reason that the Prophet (S) did not expound (upon it). As God Most High said: *They will ask thee concerning the soul. Say: The soul is by the command of my Lord...* (Q. 17:85) He received (in revelation) no more (about this), other than to say: "The soul is one of the Divine works and is of the world of command, and has come from that world: *Surely His is the creation and the command.* (Q. 7:54)

The world of creation is one thing and the world of command, another. Everything that is affected by linear measurement, amount, and quantity is called the "World of Creation";¹²⁸ for, the root meaning of "creation" is "calculation, estimation." The human soul has neither amount nor quantity, and for this reason it cannot be divided. If it were divisible, then it would be lawful for one side of it to be ignorant of something, while the other side would have knowledge of that same thing. At the same time, a person could be both knowledgeable and ignorant. Such a thing would be impossible!

But this "spirit" (*rūh*), with its indivisibility and its not being affected by dimensions, is created. "Creation" is also called "creating."¹²⁹ Thus, in this sense, (the soul) is of the world of creation; but in another, it is of the world of command, not of the created (substantial) world; for the world of command consists of things not occupying space or having dimensions.

So, persons who supposed that the soul is eternally pre-existent¹³⁰ are mistaken. And persons who said that it is accidental are also wrong, for something accidental cannot establish itself; it is a consequence. The vital principle (*jān*) is the essence of a person, and all form is subject to it. How can it be a consequence?

¹²⁶ i.e., an experiment in sensory deprivation.

¹²⁷ "Religious Law": *Sharī'at*.

¹²⁸ "World of Creation" (*‘ālam-i khalq*): that is, Divine fiat.

¹²⁹ Ghazzali is giving the Persian equivalent (*āfarīdan*) of the Arabic *khalq*.

¹³⁰ "eternally pre-existent" (*qadīm*): that is, coeval with God.

Persons who said that it is physical have also made a mistake, for the physical may be divided, but the soul cannot be divided. However, there is something else called the "animating spirit" (*rūh*)¹³¹ which is divisible and which even the animals possess. But, the spirit that we call the "soul" (*dil*) is the seat of the knowledge of God Most High. Beasts do not have this. It is neither a physical body nor an accident; rather, it is an essence from the essence of the angels, and its true nature is very difficult to comprehend. It is not permissible to expand (upon this).

[This spiritual knowledge]¹³² is not needed at the beginning for traveling the way of religion. The beginning of the way of religion is, rather, earnest striving.¹³³ If a person makes this earnest striving a prerequisite, this spiritual knowledge will come to him of itself, without hearing it from anyone else. This spiritual knowledge is one of the gifts about which God, may He be honored and glorified, said: *As for those who strive in Us, We shall surely guide them in Our paths.* (Q. 29:69)

It is not proper to speak about the reality of the soul with anyone who has not yet completed his earnest striving. But before that striving, he must first get to know the army of the soul. Without this, a person cannot strive.

4. THE SOUL, THE MONARCH OF THE BODY

Know that the body is the kingdom of the soul, and in this kingdom, the soul possesses various armies: *No one knows the hosts of thy Lord save Him.* (Q. 74:31) The created soul was created for the Hereafter. Its work is the seeking of happiness; and its happiness is in the spiritual knowledge of God Most High. It acquires this knowledge of God Most High through the knowledge of His handiwork, and this is the totality of the universe. It learns about the wonders of the universe by means of the senses, and these senses are established in the body.

Thus, knowledge is (the soul's) prey; the senses are its net. The physical body is its vehicle and the bearer of its net. As a result, it is for this reason that a person needs a body. His body is a vehicle made from water, earth, heat, and moisture.¹³⁴ For this reason he is weak and in danger of destruction from within because of hunger and thirst, and from without because of fire, water, being the prey of enemies and beasts, and the like.

¹³¹ Here Ghazzali is making a distinction between *dil* and *rūh*. *Dil* is the eternal imperishable soul while *rūh* is the animating spirit which humans share with other creatures. The Arabic root of *rūh* (*r-w-h*) implies going, motion. The word for "wind" (*rih*) has the same root. *Rūh* can mean "spirit" in all senses: eternal or tied to life.

¹³² From the AA text.

¹³³ "earnest striving": *mujāhadat*.

¹³⁴ The four classical elements, moisture being substituted for air.

Consequently, because of hunger and thirst, he requires food and drink. For these purposes, he needs two armies: one external, as the hands, feet, mouth, teeth, and stomach; and another internal, as appetite and anger. But, as it is not possible for a person to seek nourishment he cannot perceive, or defend himself from enemies he cannot perceive, he falls into the need of the powers of perception. Some of these are external and they are the five senses: the nose, the eyes, the ears, taste, and touch.

However, some also are internal, and they are also five in number. They are located in the brain: the power of imagination, the power of thought, the power of memory, the power of recall, and the power of conjecture. Each one of these powers has a special task. Should one of them become flawed, a person's functions will be flawed, in both worldly and religious affairs.

All of these armies, external and internal, are at the command of the soul (*dil*) which is the commander and the king of them all. When it orders the tongue, it commences to speak, as it orders the hand to seize, the foot to walk, and the eye to look. When it commands the power of thought, he thinks. They are all made to blindly obey its orders so that the body may be preserved and it may satisfy its requirements and achieve its objectives. It completes the enterprise of the Hereafter and sows the seeds of its own happiness. The obedience of these armies to the soul resembles the obedience of the angels to God Most High. They cannot oppose any command; rather they obey naturally and willingly.

5. THE ARMIES OF THE SOUL

Coming to know the details of the armies of the soul is lengthy, but their purposes may be made known to thee by examples. Know that the metaphor of the body is a nation and its limbs and organs are its workers. Carnal appetite¹³⁵ is the tax collector, anger is the policeman, and the soul (*dil*) is the king. Reason, is the king's chief minister. The king needs all of these in order to rule his kingdom properly.

But the carnal appetite—the tax collector—is a liar, a babbler, and a confounder. It opposes whatever Chief Minister Reason says. It always desires to confiscate whatever wealth there is in the kingdom under the pretext of taxation. And this anger, the policeman of the state, is wicked and very hot-tempered. It always loves killing, breaking, and overthrowing.

Accordingly, if the king of the land were always to consult the minister of reason, ignore the lying and greedy tax collector and not give ear to whatever he says in opposition to that minister; and (if he were to)

¹³⁵ "carnal appetite": *shahwat*.

set the policeman, while keeping him tightly under control and preventing him from excess, over the tax collector so that he would not be able to create confusion; then the kingdom would be well-ordered.

In the same way, should King Soul act at the advice of Minister Intellect, and keep appetite and anger under tight control and in obedience to reason, then he will not be mastered by them; nor will the highway to (spiritual) happiness and reaching the Divine Presence be cut off to him. But, should reason become the prisoner of appetite and anger, then the kingdom will be desolate, and the king will become wretched and destroyed.

6. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SOUL

From what has been said, thou hast learned that carnal appetite and anger have been created for the nourishment and preservation of the body. Therefore, these two are the servants of the body and food and drink are the fodder of the body. The body has been created in order to bear the senses; therefore, the body is the servant of the senses. The senses have been created for the intelligence gathering of the intellect, in order to serve as its net so that it may know of the handiwork of God Most High.

Accordingly, the senses are the servant of the intellect, and the intellect has been created for the soul, to be its candle and lamp. By its light, the soul may see the Divine Presence which is its Paradise. Thus, the intellect is the servant of the soul, and the soul has been created to witness the beauty of Presence of God's Dominion. When acting in this role, (the soul) becomes the slave and servant of the Divine Presence and that which God said: *I created the jinn and mankind only that they might worship Me* (Q. 51:56), refers to this.

For this reason the soul was created and given its kingdom and its armies. The vehicle of the body was given over in charge to it so that it might journey from the world of dust to the Highest of the High. If it wishes to show gratitude for this blessing and fulfill this obligation of service, it must sit like a monarch in the center of the kingdom and make the Divine Presence its prayer-direction and goal. (It must) make the Hereafter its homeland and resting place. It must make a way station of the world and a conveyance of the body. It must make servants of the limbs and organs and a minister of the intellect. It must make the overseer of property of the carnal appetite and the policeman of anger.

(The soul) makes of the senses its spies, each one responsible for a different sphere in order to collect the information of that sphere. It makes the power of imagination, which is in the front of the brain, the master of the post and those spies will deposit their information with it. It makes the power of memory, which is in the back of the brain, their mailbag and repository. At the appropriate time, the information will be

presented to Minister Intellect. The minister, according to the information he receives from the kingdom, will arrange its affairs and the journeys of the king. He takes the necessary steps if he finds that one of the armies, such as appetite or anger, etc., is in rebellion against the king and has acted in disobedience, intending to attack him.

However, the minister does not seek to kill the rebel, for the kingdom could not be ruled without him. Instead, he arranges to bring the rebel back within the boundaries of obedience. In that way, the rebel becomes a helper, not an enemy, in the journey that lies ahead. He becomes a friend, not a thief or a bandit. If (the tamed rebel) does this, he will be happy and grateful. He will receive a robe of honor in due time. But, if he disobeys and rises in support of bandits and enemies in rebellion, then he is ungrateful and vicious, and he receives chastisement and punishment.

7. THE ROOTS OF GOOD AND BAD IN A HUMAN BEING

Know that there is a connection between the soul and each of these armies that are inside a person. Each one gives him some quality or trait. Some of these are bad and bring him to ruin, while others are good and bring him happiness.

Though the number of these qualities is great, they may be grouped into four types: bestial, predatory, devilish, and angelic. Because carnal appetite and avarice have been placed in one, he does beastly things, such as excess in eating and copulation. Because anger has been placed in him, he behaves like dogs, wolves, and lions—beating, killing, and falling upon people with the violence of fist and tongue. Because deceit, treachery, hypocrisy, fraud, and sowing public discord have been placed in him, he does the work of demons. Because reason has been placed in him, he does the work of angels, such as loving knowledge and morality, abstaining from reprehensible acts, striving for goodness among people, keeping himself above miserliness, rejoicing in the knowledge of affairs, and considering ignorance and foolishness a defect.

Thou mayest say that in truth there are four things inside the skin of each human being: a dog, a pig, a demon, and an angel. The dog is blameworthy and reproachable, not because of its limbs or skin; rather because of the innate nature that makes it attack people. The pig is not despised because of its appearance; rather, it is because of its excessive avidity, greed, and avarice for filthy and repulsive things. In reality, a canine or porcine soul means this, and it is the same with man. The true devilish and angelic natures of these qualities are in the same manner as we have noted above.

A human being is commanded to reveal the fraud and deceit of Satan by means of the radiance of the intellect—one of the effects of the lights of the angels—so that (Satan) may be abased and unable to sow

any discord. As the Prophet (S) said: "There is a devil for every person, even one for me; but God Most High has given me victory over him and made him my conquest. He cannot command any evil."

(Man) has also been told that he must discipline this pig of greed and carnality and the dog of anger. He must bring them under control of the intellect so that they neither rise nor sit except at its command. If he does this, he will obtain the good qualities and traits that are the seeds of his (spiritual) happiness.

But, should he do other than this, and gird his loins in their service, bad qualities will appear in him, which become the seeds of his wretchedness. If his state be revealed to him, for example, in sleep or wakefulness, he finds himself in the service of a pig, a dog, or a demon. It is well known what the fate (in the Hereafter) of a person who hands over a Muslim to be the prisoner of an unbeliever would be. Consider, then, how much worse would be the condition of him who hands over an angel as a prisoner to dogs, pigs, and demons!

Most people, if they be honest and take account, are day and night in the service of their own selves' desires and passions. That is their condition, even though they are in the form of humans. Tomorrow at the Resurrection, these qualities will be revealed, and their forms will correspond to their natures. On that day, that person whose appetite and greed had dominated him will be seen in the form of a pig. That person, whose anger had dominated him, will be seen in the form of wolf.

It is for this that the interpretation for a person who sees a wolf in a dream is that he is a tyrannical person. If he sees a pig in a dream, the interpretation is that he is an impure man. This is because sleep is the proof-giver of death, insofar as one is further from the world because of sleep. Form follows nature, so that every one is seen in the same form that is inside him. This is a great mystery that is not possible to explain in this book.

8. GUARDING ONE'S ACTIVITIES AND RESTS

Now that thou hast learned that these four valiant warriors and overseers are within thee, observe thy conduct and rests as to which of these four thou dost obey. Recognize truly that from every move thou makest, a trait is acquired by the soul that remains with thee and accompanies thee to (the next) world. These traits are called "morals." And all morals spring from these four warriors.

If thou submit to the pig of appetite, the attributes of foulness, shamelessness, greed, sycophancy, [hypocrisy,]¹³⁶ niggardliness, greed, rejoicing in the misfortunes of others, envy, etc. will appear in thee. But

¹³⁶ From the AA text.

if thou dost master it and control it with discipline, [intelligence, and the Religious Law];¹³⁷ then the attributes of contentment, self-restraint, modesty, peace, delicacy, piety, moderation, disinterest, and moderation will appear in thee.

If thou submit to the dog of anger, the attributes of rashness, impurity,¹³⁸ boastfulness, flaunting, treachery, self-importance, oppression, scorn, demeaning others, and assaulting people will appear in thee. But, if thou master and control this dog with discipline, patience, endurance, forgiveness, firmness, courage, repose, boldness, and generosity will appear in thou.

If thou submit to that Satan, whose work it is to arouse and encourage the pig and the dog and to teach them trickery and deceit; then the attributes of deceptiveness, treachery, fraud, mean spiritedness, trickery, and adulteration will appear in thee. But if thou overcome him and are not deceived by his hypocrisy, if thou give victory to the army of reason; then astuteness, spiritual knowledge, learning, wisdom, rectitude, good character, greatness, and leadership will appear in thee. And if these good attributes stay with thee, they will be among thy lasting good deeds¹³⁹ and the seeds of thy happiness.

Those deeds from which bad characteristics arise are called "sins," and those from which good characteristics arise are called "devotion"¹⁴⁰ (to God)." The activities and rests of a person are not devoid of these two.

The soul (*dil*) is like a bright mirror; repugnant traits are like smoke and darkness which, when they touch it, darken it so that tomorrow¹⁴¹ one will not see the Divine Presence and it will become veiled (to one's view). Good traits are the light that reaches the soul and wipes away the darkness of sin. It is for this that the Prophet (S) said: "*Follow a bad deed with a good (deed) so that (the bad) may be erased.*" At the Resurrection, it may be that the soul comes to a desert, either bright or dark. (*None will be saved) except him who comes to God with a sound heart.* (Q. 26:89)¹⁴²

¹³⁷ From the AA text.

¹³⁸ "impurity" (*nāpākī*): following AA. HK reads *nābākī*, "fearlessness," which seems to repeat the previous "rashness" (*tahawwur*). Impurity is associated with dogs.

¹³⁹ "lasting good deeds": *bāqiyāt-i sālihāt*.

¹⁴⁰ Or "obedience."

¹⁴¹ "tomorrow" (*fardā*): the Hereafter; the Day of Resurrection.

¹⁴² "*except him who comes to God with a sound heart*" (Q. 26:89): Both HK and AA record this verse with a preceding Arabic phrase *wa lā yanjū*—"and he will not be saved" or "none will be saved"—as though it were part of the verse (both editions use bold type for Arabic and Quranic quotations). This phrase does not occur in any copy of the Quran I have checked. Hence, while translating it, I have removed it from the format we are using to distinguish citations from the Quran. It is possibly a misreading of the last word of the preceding verse *wa lā banūn*—"nor sons"—which it resembles in Arabic

A person's soul, at the beginning of its creation, is like (raw) iron from which—if a person keeps it as he should—is made a shining mirror that displays the entire universe. If not, it will all rust and become so that nothing will be reflected in it. As God Most High said: *Nay, but that which they have earned is rust upon their souls.* (Q. 83:14)

9. THE ORIGIN OF A HUMAN BEING IS OF THE ESSENCE OF ANGELS

Now thou wilt say: "Since in man there are the attributes of beasts of prey, other animals, devils, and angels; how do we know that his origin lies in the essence of the angels, and that the others are foreign [and accidental]?"¹⁴³ How do we know that he has been created for angelicness and the moral nature (of the angels), so that he may acquire that, and not for the other (non-angelic) traits? Know that thou recognizest this because thou knowest that a human being is nobler and more perfect than animals and savage beasts. Everything to which perfection may have been given, which is his final stage, is the reason for his having been created.

For example: The horse is nobler than the donkey because the donkey was created to carry burdens, while the horse (was created) for running, warfare, and wars of faith,¹⁴⁴ so that it runs and canters beneath the rider as necessary. It has also been given the strength to carry burdens, like the donkey, but it has also been given an increased perfection that has not been given to the donkey. If (the horse) is not up to its task, then it is made into a pack animal and falls to the level of a donkey. This becomes its ruin and abasement.

In the same way, some suppose that man has been created for eating, sleeping, copulating, and taking pleasure and they spend all their time in these! Some like the Arabs, the Kurds, and the Turks suppose that man was created for dominion, violence, and conquest. Both groups are in error; for eating and copulating are carnal appetites. These have also been given to the quadrupeds. A camel can eat more than a man can, and the copulation of sparrows is more frequent than that of mankind. So, how are humans superior to them? Dominion and conquest are with anger, and they have been given to the beasts of prey.

orthography. However, it is in this work unusual for Ghazzali to introduce the Quranic verse with Arabic rather than Persian.

¹⁴³ From the AA text.

¹⁴⁴ "wars of faith": *jihād* means "striving, endeavor" in all senses, not just warfare which is indeed called the "lesser striving," as opposed to the struggle with oneself. Here, however, Ghazzali is referring to military operations. Ghazzali's life coincided with the great Euro-Christian assault on Islam known as the Crusades. Jerusalem was captured the soldiers of the First Crusade in AH493-4/1099CE and held until its liberation by Ṣalāḥuddin (Saladin) in AH583-4/1187CE.

Therefore, a human being has that which has been given to the animals and wild beasts, but in addition, he has been given a perfection, and that is intellect. With it, he comes to know God Most High and His handiwork. With it, he delivers himself from the grasp of appetite and anger. This is the attribute of the angels! With it, he dominates animals and beasts of prey. All are subservient to him; everything that is upon the face of the earth, as God Most High said: *He has made all of that which is on earth subservient to you.* (Q. 45:13)

So, the true nature of a human being is that his perfection and his nobility lie within him, and other attributes are foreign and acquired. They were sent to him to aid and serve him. For this reason, when he dies, neither anger nor appetite remains, just it remains: either a bright, gleaming essence, adorned with the spiritual knowledge of God Most High in the form of an angel so that it is necessarily their companion; and this is the companion of the heavenly host. They are always in the Divine Presence: *In the seat of truth with a Mighty King*; (Q. 54:55) or dark, gloomy, with head bowed in shame, the darkness because of the tarnishing that comes from the gloom of sin, and the shame that comes from taking one's ease with the morals of the carnal appetite and anger. Whatever his appetite was, he satisfied it in this world. His soul is turned to this world, for his appetites and desires are of this world. But this world is beneath that (next) world. Thus, his face was looking downward and inverted. This is the meaning of what He said: *When the guilty hang their heads before their Lord.* (Q. 32:12)

Such people will be with Satan in (that place in hell called) *Sijjīn*.¹⁴⁵ Not everyone knows the meaning of *Sijjīn* and for that reason He asked: *And what will make thee comprehend what Sijjīn is?* (Q. 83:8)

10. THE MARVELS OF THE WORLDS OF THE SOUL

There is no end to the marvels of the worlds of the soul. Its nobility lies in that it is more marvelous than all else; but most people are heedless of that. Its nobility has two degrees: one is by way of knowledge; the second is by way of power. Its nobility from knowledge has two degrees: one may be understood by the mass of mankind, the other is less obvious and is not known by every person, and that one is rarer.

As for what is obvious, it is that it has the ability to learn all sciences and arts, in order to know all arts, and to read and learn all that is in books, such as geometry, mathematics, medicine, astrology, and religious sciences. Although (the soul) is one thing and not divisible, it

¹⁴⁵ *Sijjīn*: Derived from the root *s-j-n* with the meaning of imprisonment. *Sijn* means "prison." "*Sijjīn*" refers to a deep pit in which the register of the wicked is kept pending judgment, and, by extension, the book itself.

can accommodate all these sciences. Indeed, all the world would be like an atom in it! In an instant, it can soar from the earth to the heights in its thought and movement, or from east to west. Though it remains bound to the earth, it measures all of the heavens and learns the measure of each star and it may tell the distance in yards! It may contrive to bring fish up from the bottom of the sea and to bring birds down from the air to the ground. It may subdue to its service powerful animals such as the elephant, the camel, and the horse. All the marvels and skills of the world are its calling, and all of this knowledge is acquired by means of the five senses, because they are external and all know its way.

But more marvelous than that is that there is a window inside the soul open to the kingdom of the heavens, just as there are five gates¹⁴⁶ outside the soul open to the world of perceptible things, that which is called the physical world, as the heavenly world is called the spiritual world. Most people are acquainted with the perceptible physical world: this is limited and of low estate. They learn about it through their senses of perception, and this knowledge is also limited.

The proof that there is another aperture inside the soul lies in two things: (1) one is dreaming. When the approaches to the (physical) senses are closed, the inner door is opened. From the celestial world and the Preserved Tablet¹⁴⁷ the unseen begins to manifest itself, so that what will be in the future may be known and seen: either clearly, just as it will be; or metaphorically so that it falls in need of interpretation. As far as (something) is external, people suppose that a person who is awake will take precedence in knowledge; while they realize that they do not see the unseen while awake, but rather see it in sleep, and not by means of the (physical) senses.

A discussion about the truth concerning dreams is not possible in this book. However, this much must be known: that the soul resembles a mirror, and the Preserved Tablet is like a mirror in which are the forms of all existing things. Just as the reflection in one mirror will be reflected in another mirror placed in front of it, so do the forms in the Preserved Tablet appear in the soul—if it is pure and is free of sensory perceptions, and it takes up a connection to it. As long as it is engaged with the sensory perceptions, it will be deprived of the connection to the celestial world. But in sleep, it is not encumbered with sensory perceptions; consequently, whatever is in (the soul's) essential nature of contemplation of the firmament begins to appear.

However, even though the senses are not active because of sleep, the imagination is in place. It is for this reason that what one sees is seen

¹⁴⁶ The five senses.

¹⁴⁷ The Preserved Tablet (*lawḥ-i mahfūz*): The tablet upon which original of the Quran was inscribed, and which later was conceived of as the tablet upon which the decrees of God are written.

in the robe of imaginary symbols; it is not clear and (fully) disclosed. It is not devoid of veils and wrappings. But when one dies, neither imagination nor the senses endure. Then things are seen unveiled and without imaginings. And it will be said to one: *And We have removed from thee thy covering and piercing is thy sight this day.* (Q. 50:22) And he will reply: *Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back; we will do right.* (32:12)

(2) Another proof is that there is no one who has a sound mind and sagacity who has not experienced the inner voice in his soul.¹⁴⁸ It does not come from the senses of perception; instead, it appears in the soul and it is not known whence it comes.

From this much, one understands that not all knowledge comes from the senses; and one knows that the soul is not of this world, but from the celestial world. The senses that were created for one for this world are necessarily a curtain between one and the celestial world. Until one can remove it, in no manner will one find a way to that world.

11. THE LINK OF THE SOUL TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Do not suppose that the window of the soul to the kingdom of heaven does not open without sleep and death. That is not so. Rather, if one practices spiritual discipline¹⁴⁹ when awake and removes the soul beyond the grasp of anger, carnal appetite, ill nature, and the necessary¹⁵⁰ of this world and one sits in a secluded place, closes one's eyes, suspends the work of sensory organs, connects the soul to the empyrean by continuously repeating "God! God!" (*Allāh! Allāh!*) with the soul (*dil*) and not the tongue until one is unaware of one's self and has no report of the entire world or of anything save God Most High. If it is thus, then the window of the soul will open even though one be awake, and one will see while awake what others see in sleep. The spirits of the angels will become visible to one in beautiful images and one will begin to see the prophets and receive benefit and help from them. The kingdoms of the earth and the heavens will be shown to one.

Wonderful things that beggar description will be seen by the person to whom this way is opened. As the Prophet (S) said: *"The earth was unrolled before me and I saw its (farthest) eastern and western regions."* And God Most High has said: *Thus did we show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth so that he might be one of those possessing certainty.* (Q. 6:75) All were in this state; indeed, all the

¹⁴⁸ That is: inspiration (*ilhām*).

¹⁴⁹ "spiritual discipline": *riyādat*.

¹⁵⁰ "the necessary" (*bāyist*): Literally, a verbal form (3rd person singular past) "it must have been, it ought to have been" being used as a noun to refer to necessities.

knowledge of the prophets came in this way, not by means of the senses and (academic) instruction. It is the beginning of all earnest striving.

As God, may He be glorified and exalted, says: *So remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him with a complete devotion.* (Q. 73:8) This means to cut oneself off from all things and to give oneself to Him totally. Concern not thyself with the arrangements of this world, for He will manage thy affairs Himself. *Lord of the East and the West! There is no god except Him, so take Him as thy protector.* (Q. 73:9) When thou hast taken Him as thy protector, become unencumbered and mix not with mankind or become involved with them. *And be patient with what they say and part with them pleasantly.* (Q. 73:10) All of this is instruction in spiritual discipline and striving. The way of the Sufis is this, and it is the way of prophethood.

On the other hand, acquiring knowledge by means of (academic) learning is the way of the religious scholars,¹⁵¹ and this too is great; but it is trivial in comparison with the knowledge of the prophets and saints that came to their souls from the Divine Presence without an intermediary or the instruction of human beings. The correctness of this way has been shown to many people, both through experience and by intellectual proof. If thou art not able to acquire this either by means of experience or the intellect; then, well, at least believe in it and attest to it, lest thou be deprived of all three levels and become an unbeliever! And these are among the marvels of the worlds of the soul and through them, the nobility of the human soul is made manifest.

12. A PERSON'S BEING BORN WITH AN INNATE NATURE

Suppose not that this is restricted to the prophets; rather, the essence of all persons in its original nature is fit for this; just as there is no iron, in its original nature, unsuited for the making of a mirror that may disclose the form of the world—unless it has been spoiled by some corrosive thrown into its substance. In the same way, every soul that has been overcome by the worldly greed and appetite for sins which have become firmly established in it—to the point of being possessed by them and assuming their nature—nullifies this (potential) suitability: *All who are born are born with an innate nature;*¹⁵² *their parents make them Jews, Christians, or Magians.*

God Most High has spoken of the generality of this capacity when He said in these words: *"Am I not your Lord?" And they said: "Yes, indeed!"* (Q. 7:172) It is as basic as answering to every sane person who asks "Is two not greater than one?" "Yes, indeed, that is

¹⁵¹ "religious scholars": *ulamāʾ*.

¹⁵² *innate nature (fiṭrat)*: that is, Islam.

correct." Even though all persons possessing the faculty of reason may not have heard or uttered this (truth), all of their instincts are replete with its acknowledgment.

The innate nature of all human beings is the same as that: the knowledge of the Divine is also in their innate nature. As the Creator Most High said: *If thou shouldst ask them: Who created the heavens and the earth? They would surely answer: God!* (Q. 31:25) And He said: *The nature of God in which He created mankind.* (Q. 30:30) With the proofs of reason and empiricism, it is plain that this (capacity) is not restricted to the prophets, for the prophets were also human beings. *God Most High said (to the Prophet): Say: I am but a mortal like you.* (Q. 18:110)

However, (as for) the person to whom this way has been opened, if it is for the good of the people, all is shown to him, and (then) he invites them to it. What has been shown him is called "the Religious Law," and that person is called a "messenger."¹⁵³ His condition is called a "miracle." If he does not engage in inviting the people, he is called a "saint"¹⁵⁴ and his states are called saintly miracles.¹⁵⁵ It is not necessary that every one in whom this state is seen be involved in the propagation of the faith. It is in the power of God Most High not to employ him in (publicly) inviting the people (to faith). This is because when the Religious Law is new there is no need for another kind of invitation, or because public propagation of the faith needs certain qualities that the saint may not possess.

Accordingly, thou must have a proper belief in sainthood and the miracles of the saints. Know, too, that the beginning of this work depends upon earnest striving, and it is a way for him to choose. However, not everyone who sows reaps, not everyone who travels, arrives, and not everyone who seeks finds. For the more precious a thing is, the more numerous the conditions and the rarer its attainment. These are the more noble of the degrees for a human being at the station of spiritual knowledge. Pursuing it without strenuous effort and without an experienced, mature guide is not possible. If these two (qualities) are present, he still will not reach his goal without the aid of Divine favor and until his destiny decrees this (spiritual) happiness (for him). This is the way to achieve the level of leadership in external knowledge and in all voluntary actions.

¹⁵³ Ghazzali uses the exact Per. equivalent (*payghambar* = "message-bearer") for the Ar. *rasūl* (messenger).

¹⁵⁴ "saint" (*walī*, pl. *awliyāʾ*): *walī* carries the connotation of friend and, by extension, a friend of God; a favorite of God (or king). The Arabic root *w-l-y* implies "proximity, nearness," hence "friend, guardian, defender," etc. In popular Islam, it usually means "saint, holy man."

¹⁵⁵ A miracle wrought by God is called *muʿjizah*, while a miracle performed by a saint is called *karāmah*, a distinction not always observed in popular speech.

13. THE NOBILITY OF THE SOUL BY WAY OF POWER

As thou hast come to know one exemplar¹⁵⁶ of the nobility of the essence of human nature, that which is called the soul (*dil*), in the way of spiritual knowledge, know now that there is also for it a nobility from power, which is an angelic quality too, and not found in other animals. It is this: that in the same way that the world of physical bodies is subject to the angels so that when, at God Most High's command, they deem it appropriate and they see that man is in need of it, they bring rain in the springtime, arouse the winds, form animals in the womb and plants on the earth, and bring them to fruition. There is a group of angels responsible for each kind of these tasks. The human soul—for it shares the essence of the angels—has also been given the power to subject some of the physical bodies of the world to itself.

Every person's private world is his (physical) body, and the body is made subservient to the soul. It is evident that the soul is not in the finger, nor are knowledge and will; but when the soul commands it, the finger moves at the soul's command. When the image of anger appears in the soul, sweat pours out from the seven members¹⁵⁷ as though it were rain. When the image of carnal appetite appears in the soul, the instrument of carnality¹⁵⁸ swells. When it thinks of eating, that faculty which is under the tongue becomes active and begins to salivate in order to moisten the food so that the person may eat.

It is no secret that the control of the soul flows through the body and that the body is subjugated to the soul. However, it must be understood that it is proper that some souls—nobler and stronger, nearer to and more resembling the angelic essence—be obeyed by other bodies external to it so that should his awe affect a lion, it will become abject and obey him. When a sick person acquires hope, he improves; when a sound person becomes anxious, he falls ill. When he forms the thought about a person for that person to come to him, a stimulus (to do that) appears in that person. If he forms the desire for it to rain, it rains.

All of this is possible with intellectual proof and is evident through experience. That which is called "the evil eye" and that which is called "sorcery" are of this kind and are the effects of a person's spirit (*nafs*) on the bodies of others, so that should that spirit be mean and envious, for example, he sees a fine steed and out of jealousy imagines its destruction. The animal will die instantly, as is said in the tradition: *The evil eye is real; it causes the man to enter the grave and the camel the pot.*

¹⁵⁶ *namūdgar*: Something or someone who gives proof of or represents virtue or skill.

¹⁵⁷ "the seven members" (*haft andām*): the head, breast, belly, hands, and feet; or, the head, hands, sides, and feet. Also called "the seven members" (*haft a'ḍā*) (Steingass).

¹⁵⁸ i.e., the penis.

So, this too is one of the marvels of the powers of the soul. If such a special quality as this appears in a person—if he is one who calls the people to faith—it is called a “(prophetic) miracle,” or if not, it is called a “(saintly) miracle.”¹⁵⁹ If these are for good deeds, then the ones who perform them are called prophets or saints.¹⁶⁰ But if they are for evil deeds, then we call that person a sorcerer.

Sorcery, the miracles (of the saints), and the miracles (of the prophets) are all related to the power of the human soul, though there are many differences among them that it is not possible to discuss in this book.

14. THE TRUE NATURE OF PROPHETHOOD AND SAINTHOOD

If a person does not know the above, then he really has no knowledge about the true nature of prophethood, except in form and by hearsay. For prophethood and sainthood are categories of the nobility of the human soul and they may be summarized in three qualities:

Firstly, that which is disclosed to the commonalty of mankind in sleep is disclosed to him when awake.

Secondly, the souls (*nafs*) of most people affect nothing but their own bodies, but soul (of a prophet or a saint) affects bodies external to his body, in a manner that is for the good of mankind and to prevent corruption.

Thirdly, that knowledge which the commonalty of mankind acquires by learning is acquired from his own internal self without the learning process. Just as it is true that an intelligent and pure-hearted person can learn some things for himself without instruction, so it is true that a stronger and purer person can learn the knowledge of all trades, or most of them, or a few of them, by himself. Such knowledge is called “intuitive.”¹⁶¹ As God Most High said: *We taught him knowledge from Ourselves.* (Q. 18:65)

Anyone in whom these three qualities are found is either a great prophet or a great saint. If he possesses but one of these, he will attain a (high) degree. Furthermore, there are gradations for each of these (qualities) and one person may have them in a lesser degree, while another in a greater degree.

¹⁵⁹ That is: the miracles or wonders attributed to saints, as opposed to the miracles attributed to the prophets. See Note 155 above.

¹⁶⁰ See Note 154 above.

¹⁶¹ “intuitive” (*ladunī*): inspired from on High, infused knowledge: mystic knowledge acquired without conscious effort, such as that given to the prophets and saints. The Quranic verse cited following uses the word *ladunnā* (from Ourselves). *Ladunī* is an abstract noun from the Arabic preposition *ladun* meaning “at, by, in the presence of, with,” etc.

The perfection of our Messenger (S) lies in that he possessed all three qualities at the highest level of perfection. When God, may He be glorified and exalted, desired to direct mankind to prophethood so that they might follow it and learn the way of (spiritual) happiness from it, He gave a proof of each of the three qualities to everyone. Dreaming is the proof of one quality, sound sagacity the proof of another, and sound instinct the proof of the third.

It is not possible for a person to come to believe in something for which he has no affinity. Whatever does not embody or represent it well to him cannot be the embodiment of that concept. For this reason, no one can comprehend perfectly the true nature of divinity, except God Most High. A discussion of this assertion is lengthy and I have given lucid proofs in the book *The Meanings of the Names of God*.¹⁶² The point is, now, that we deem it permissible that beyond these three qualities, prophets and saints have other qualities of which we have no knowledge because we cannot perceive them. So, as we say that no one knows God perfectly except God Most High (Himself), we say that no one knows the Messenger, on whom be peace, perfectly except the Messenger, and whoever is at his exalted degree.

Therefore, among mankind, prophets know the worth of prophets. No more is known to us than that. If we did not dream and someone said to us: "A person falls down and does not move or see or hear, but he knows what will happen tomorrow as though he were (awake), hearing and seeing what he could not know," we would never believe it, because a person would never believe what he had not seen. For this reason, God Most High said: *Nay, but they denied that which their knowledge could not encompass and the interpretation of which has not come to them.* (Q. 10:39) He (also) said: *And since they will not be guided by (this Quran), they say: This is an ancient lie.* (Q. 46:11)

Be not surprised if the prophets and the saints have an attribute of which others have no inkling, and that they have noble delights and states from it. Thou seest that a person who has no aptitude for poetry finds no pleasure in the rhythm of music. If someone tries to make him understand its pleasure, he will not be able to do so. That is because he has no affinity for it. In the same manner, the blind cannot comprehend the pleasure of colors and the desire to see them. Consequently, be not surprised by the power of God Most High Who has created some perceptions after the degree of prophethood and before it of which no person is aware.

¹⁶² *The Meanings of the Names of God (Maʿānī Asmāʾ Allāh)*: Presumably this work is the same as *Al-maṣṣad al-asnāʾ fī sharḥ asmāʾ Allāh al-ḥusnāʾ* (*The Most Radiant Meaning in the Explanation of Most Beautiful Names of God*), No. 33 in HK's list of the writings of Ghazzali, its composition coming in the body of work between *The Revival of the Religious Sciences* and *The Alchemy of Happiness*.

15. THE VEILING OF THE WAY

From all that has gone before, the nobility of the essence of human nature and what the way of the Sufis is has been made clear. Certainly, thou hast heard Sufis say: "Knowledge is a veil (obstructing) this way," and thou hast rejected it. Do not reject those words, for they are true. Why? When thou becomest occupied with and immersed in sensory perceptions and all the knowledge obtained by means of them, they become a veil.

The similitude of the soul is a pool, and the similitude of the senses is five channels of water that flow into that pool from the outside. If thou wish for pure water to rise from the bottom of the pool, it must be done in this fashion: all of the water must be removed from the pool and all of the mud that has been deposited by that water cleaned out. The channels must be closed off so that water does not flow in from them. Then the bottom of the pool must be excavated until pure water rises from within the pool. As long as the pool is occupied by that water which has come in from the outside, it is not possible for the internal water to well up. In the same way, the knowledge which comes from inside the soul will not appear until the soul is emptied of all that has entered it from the outside.

However, if the savant empties himself of the knowledge he has learned and his soul is not occupied with it, then that former knowledge will not be a veil for him. It is possible that it will become an opening for him; just as past imaginings are not a veil for the soul when it is emptied of imaginings and sensory perceptions. The cause for the veil is that when a person learns the belief of the followers of the orthodox Practice of the Prophet¹⁶³ and its proofs as they are discussed in polemics and debates, he takes them all upon his soul and believes that beyond what he has learned there is no other knowledge. If something different enters his soul, he says: "This is different from what I have heard and anything different from it is invalid."

It will never be possible for the truth of matters to be shown to him. That belief which the commonalty of mankind learns is the mould of truth, not truth itself. Complete spiritual knowledge is that the truths be uncovered from that mould, as a kernel is taken out of the husk.

Know that no truth has been disclosed to a person who learns the way of disputation in defense of belief. Since he supposes that what he possesses is all, this supposition becomes his veil. According to how much this supposition that he has learned something has mastered a person, the more such people are veiled (from the truth). This is the degree of the disputatious.

¹⁶³ "Practice of the Prophet": *Sunnah* or *Sunnat*.

Therefore, should a person come out of this supposition, knowledge will not be a veil before him. Instead, when this opening appears to him, his degree attains the farthest limit of perfection and his way is safer and straighter. A person whose foot has not been previously firmly placed in knowledge will spend a long time in imaginary bonds and a little cause for doubt will become veil for him. But the savant is immune from such danger. Therefore, thou must know the meaning of "knowledge is a veil," and not deny it when thou hearest it from a person who has reached the degree of ecstasis.¹⁶⁴

Yet these freethinkers¹⁶⁵, these useless ringdoves who have appeared in this era; never have they themselves enjoyed this state, but they have excerpted deceptive phrases from idle ravings of the Sufis. Their business is to wash themselves every day and to outfit themselves with a loin wrapper,¹⁶⁶ a ragged garment, and a prayer carpet. Then they slander knowledge and the religious scholars. They deserve death and are demons among the people. They are the enemies of God and the Prophet, for God and the Prophet have praised knowledge and the scholars and have invited the entire world to knowledge. These collared wretches, since they have no state and have acquired no knowledge—who makes their speech lawful? They are like that person who has heard that the philosopher's stone¹⁶⁷ is better than gold, because limitless gold can be made from it. If someone places a treasure of gold before him, he will refuse it, saying: "What good is gold and what value does it have? I want the philosopher's stone, which is its source!" He will never possess the philosopher's stone. He will remain a penniless, hungry wretch, relishing and bragging about his words: "I said that the philosopher's stone is better than gold."

Thus, the apocalypses of the prophets and saints is like the philosopher's stone and the knowledge of the religious scholars is like gold; for, in short, the possessor of the philosopher's stone is superior to the possessor of gold. However, there is another point here: if a person should have enough of the stone to make a hundred dinars, he would not be superior to a person who had a thousand (dinars). Though there are many books about alchemy and much talk about it, and many seek the

¹⁶⁴ "ectasis": *mukāshafat*.

¹⁶⁵ Freethinkers, or Libertines (*ibāḥatin*): Ghazzali is referring to members of the *Ibāhiyah* sect who were libertines, regarding all things lawful. They did not consider themselves bound by the limits and responsibilities of the Religious Law, nor did they think observing its commands necessary for the "people of the truth" (*ahl-i ḥaqīqat*). The Arabic word *ibāḥah* is a verbal noun meaning "to disclose, abandon, permit, allow, justify, warrant, make lawful." W. Montgomery Watt calls them "Latitudinarians."

¹⁶⁶ "loin wrapper" (*fūṭah*): a rectangular piece of loosely woven cloth wrapped around the waist and covering the privates when in the public bath or similar situations. Still in use in public baths, in modern Persian it is usually called a *lung*.

¹⁶⁷ Lead, or the philosopher's stone, which alchemy was supposed to change to gold.

philosopher's stone, the truth is that no one has found it during many ages. Most of those who start out to look for it find only false coin. So, the business of the Sufis is like that; they are scarce. Those there are, are few; and it is rare to find one who has achieved perfection.

Therefore, from this thou must know that every one in whom a little of the Sufi state may be found is not superior to all scholars. Most of them have this at the beginning of their calling, but then they fall away and do not perfect it. There are others, overcome with melancholy or a fancy and, having no portion of truth, suppose that that is an achievement! Nine out of ten are thus. Just as there is truth in dreams, yet there are confused, senseless dreams; in that state, it is like that. Rather, superiority over the religious scholar is his who is so perfect in that state that every science connected to religion, which others acquire through study, he himself knows without study, but this is difficult and rare.

So, thou must have faith in the verity of the way of Sufism and their (the Sufis') merit. Lose not thy faith in them because of the freethinkers of this age. Know that whoever reviles knowledge and the religious scholars does so out of (his own) fruitlessness.¹⁶⁸

16. THE HAPPINESS OF A HUMAN BEING LIES IN THE SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD MOST HIGH

Surely, thou wilt say: "What demonstrates that human (spiritual) happiness lies in the spiritual knowledge of God Most High?" Know that it is demonstrated by that which thou already knowest: that the happiness of every thing is in that in which one's pleasure and ease lie. The pleasure of everything lies in that it is required by one's nature. The requirement of one's nature for anything is that for which (one's nature) was created, as the pleasure of the carnal appetite lies in satisfying its craving, the pleasure of anger is in taking revenge on an enemy, the pleasure of the eye is in looking at beautiful forms, and the pleasure of the ear is in listening to delightful songs and tunes.

In the same way, the pleasure of the soul lies in its special quality for which it was created: and that is the knowledge of the true nature of matters, and this is the special quality of the human soul. As for carnal appetite, anger, and sensory perception by means of the five senses—these themselves are for dumb animals.

It is because of this that it is in the nature of a person to investigate that which he does not know in order to know it. He delights in everything that he knows and is proud of it, even though it is, for example, some trifling thing such as chess. If it is said to a person who knows (chess): "Do not teach it to anyone," he will find it difficult to

¹⁶⁸ That is, he reviles them because he himself has accomplished nothing.

restrain himself, for he delights in his knowledge of the strange game and he wishes to display his accomplishment (to others).

Now that thou knowest that the pleasure of the soul lies in the spiritual knowledge of matters, thou knowest that however much the knowledge of something is greater and nobler, the pleasure is greater. For that person who delights in knowing the secrets of a minister will be more delighted to know the secrets of a king and his thoughts about the management of the kingdom. And that person who knows geometry and the form and dimensions of the heavens will be happier than he who knows how to play chess. And the person who has learned how the chessmen must be placed and has done so, has derived a greater pleasure than the person who knows how it must be played.

In the very same way, however much the thing learned is nobler, its knowledge is nobler and the pleasure (of that knowledge) is that much greater. There is no being nobler than that in Whom lies the nobility of all existing things. He is the Sovereign and King of both worlds and all the wonders of the universe are the signs of His handiwork. Consequently, there can be no knowledge nobler and more pleasurable than this; no spectacle can be more pleasurable than the spectacle of the Divine Presence, and that is according to demand of the soul's nature. This is because the demand of the nature of any thing is its natural disposition, for sake of which it was created.

If a soul be diseased thereby nullifying the demand for this knowledge, it is like a diseased body in which the demand for food is nullified so that it prefers clay to bread.¹⁶⁹ If (the body) is not treated to restore its natural appetite to its place and the perverse appetite does not depart from him, he will be wretched in this world and perish. That person, whose appetite for other things is stronger in his soul than the appetite for the spiritual knowledge of the Divine Presence in his soul, will be wretched in the next world and ruined if he is not cured.

All of the sensual appetites and pleasures attached to the human body necessarily lapse at death and the sorrow that was carried by the body there becomes nullified; but the pleasure of the spiritual knowledge attached to the soul is doubled at death, for the soul is not destroyed at death. Rather, it becomes more luminous and its pleasure is multiplied because the troubling of the carnal appetites has departed (from it). A complete explanation of this will come and be found at the end of the book in the chapter on love,¹⁷⁰ *if God Most High be willing*.

¹⁶⁹ Probably a reference to geophagia, the practice of eating earth or clay.

¹⁷⁰ Fourth Pillar, Chapter 9.

17. THE MARVELS OF (HIS) HANDIWORK IN THE HUMAN BODY

Let this amount that has been said about the states of the human essence in a book such as this suffice. If someone should want further explanation, we have given it in the book named *The Marvels of the Heart*.¹⁷¹ However, even with these two books, man will not become a perfect knower¹⁷² of the self, for all this explanation is (but) of some of the attributes of the soul, and this is one pillar; the other pillar of a human being is the body.

There are also many marvels in the creation of the body. Externally and internally, in each organ, there are marvelous qualities; in each one, there are strange graces. In the human body, there are several thousand sinews, veins, and bones, each one possessing a different shape and attribute, each one for a special purpose. And thou art unaware of all of this! Thou knowest this much, that the hand is for grasping, the foot is for walking, and the tongue is for speaking. But thou knowest not that thine eye is composed of ten different layers. If there is one less than ten, sight is impaired. Nor dost thou know what each layer is for and for what purpose the eye needs it. The (small) size of the eye is obvious, but its scientific exposition has filled many large volumes.

Of course, if thou know this not, it is not strange that thou wilt not know what the internal organs, such as the liver, the spleen, the gall bladder, the kidneys, etc., are for. The purpose of the liver is to convert all of the various kinds of food that reach it from the stomach into an homogeneous (substance) the color of blood, so that it may be suitable to nourish the seven members.¹⁷³ After the blood is matured in the liver, part of it remains as dregs: that is the black bile. The purpose of the spleen is to remove the black bile from (the liver). On the top of it a froth like egg yolk accumulates. That is the yellow bile or gall. The purpose of the gall bladder is to draw the gall from it. When the blood emerges from the liver, it is thin, diluted, and insubstantial. The purpose of the kidneys is take away water from it so that the blood, without the black and yellow biles, reaches the veins with sustenance.

If the gall bladder be damaged, the gall stays in the blood. From that, jaundice arises and other illnesses related to yellow bile appear. If the spleen is afflicted, the black bile stays with the blood and diseases

¹⁷¹ *The Marvels of the Heart* (*ʿAjāʾib al-Qalb*), or "soul," *qalb* being the Arabic equivalent of Persian *dil* in Ghazzali's lexicon. See also Note 120. This book is not found in HK's list; it may be a section of a larger work.

¹⁷² "knower" (*ʿarif*): apart from its general meaning of "one who knows," in religious and especially mystical circles, it has the special meaning of "saint, holy man, gnostic" and describes one who has achieved the highest state of a mystic.

¹⁷³ See Note 157 above.

related to black bile appear. If the kidneys be afflicted and water remain in the blood, dropsy will result.

In the same way, every one of the external and internal organs has been created for a particular function without which the body would be defective. Indeed, the human body is, in miniature, a model of the entire world. In it, there is a parallel for everything that has been created in the world: the bones are like the mountains, sweat is like water, the hair is like the forests, the brain is like the sky, the senses are like the stars; the details of this comparison are lengthy. Moreover, for every kind of thing that has been created there is a parallel: such as for pigs, dogs, wolves, beasts of burden, demons, fairies, and angels, as has been noted previously.

And for every kind of endeavor in the world there is a parallel, too: the power of the stomach is like a cook, it digests the food; and that which sends the strained food to the liver and the sediment to the intestines is like an oil presser; and that which converts the strained food to blood in the liver is like a dyer; and that which changes the blood in the breast to white milk and to semen in the testicles is like a washerman; and that which draws nourishment from the liver to itself in every part (of the body) is like a street vendor; and that in the kidneys which draws water from the liver and conducts it to the bladder is like a water-bearer; and that which excretes the sediment from the intestines is like a sweeper; and that which excites the yellow and black biles inside the abdomen to ruin the body is like a seditious charlatan; and that which blocks the gall and illnesses is like a just chief. The exposition of this is also lengthy.

The point is that thou shouldst realize how many different factors there are inside thee, each one of which is engaged in thine enterprise. While thou art enjoying a sweet sleep, they never rest in thy service. Neither art thou aware of them nor dost thou express gratitude for the fact that they have been set up for thy service. Should some one send thee his slave to work for thee for a day, thou wilt spend a lifetime thanking him. Yet thou dost not remember Him Who has sent thousands of workmen inside thee to serve thee, servants who do not pause for one moment in their service during thine entire lifetime!

The knowledge of the structure of the body and the use of its limbs is called "anatomy." It is a great science, yet people neglect it and do not study it. Those who do, study in order to become doctors of medicine, but medicine and the study of medicine are trivial even though there is a need for them; they have no connection to the way of religion. However, if a person studies it in order to see the wonders of God Most High's handiwork, three of the Divine Attributes will necessarily appear to him:

The first is that he will know that the builder of this mould and the Creator of this person is perfectly All-Powerful. His power cannot be

affected by defect or weakness, for He can do whatever He desires. There is no work in the world more wonderful than this: that from a droplet of fluid He creates such a person! For One Who can do this, resurrecting him after death will be (much) easier!

The second is that he will know that there is a Knower Whose knowledge encompasses all things. Such marvels with all these strange devisings would not be possible except through the perfection of (His) knowledge.

The third is that His grace, mercy, and care for His servants are limitless. The Creator has not stinted in anything that is requisite for him; rather, He has given him what is requisite, such as a heart, a liver, a brain, and the basics of life. And He has given him things which he needed, but were not absolute necessities, such as hands, feet, eyes, and a tongue. And He has given him that which was not needed or necessary, but would improve his appearance, such as the blackness of the hair, the redness of the lips, the arch of the eyebrows, a straight posture, the evenness of the eyelashes, etc. He did not show this grace and attention only to mankind; on the contrary, to all things created, even to a gnat, a fly, or a bee. He gave them what was needed by them, and then He adorned their shapes and exteriors with beautiful colors and patterns

Thus, a study of the details of the creation of the human body is the key to the spiritual knowledge of the Divine attributes. It is in this manner and for this reason that this science (anatomy) is noble, not because a physician has need of it. Just as the more of the oddities of poetry, composition, and art thou knowest, the more the greatness of the poet, composer, or artist increases in thy heart; so the creative power of God Most High, too, is the key to the knowledge of the greatness of the Creator, may He be glorified!

And this is also a chapter of the knowledge of the self (*nafs*), but (this knowledge of the body) is trivial in comparison with the knowledge of the soul. The body is like a horse and the soul is like the rider. The object of creation is the rider, not the mount. The mount is for the rider, not the rider for the mount. However, let this also be said so that thou may know that thou canst not completely comprehend thyself so easily, even though there is nothing nearer to thee than thou art. A person who does not know himself and claims to know something else is like a bankrupt who cannot feed himself, but claims to give food to all of the poor of the city and that they eat his bread. This is both repugnant and absurd.

18. THE EXTREMITY OF HUMAN WEAKNESS AND INADEQUACY IN THIS WORLD

Now that thou hast come to know, from all this, the nobility, glory, and greatness of the essence of the human soul (*dil*), know that this precious essence has been given to thee and then hidden from thee. If thou seek it not, if thou spoil it and neglect it, it will be a tremendous negligence and loss! Make the effort to search for thine own soul and bring it out from among the entanglements of the world. Care for it in keeping with its perfection, so that its nobility and glory may be apparent in this world. Let it experience carefree joy, inextinguishable eternal life, unflagging power, certain spiritual knowledge, and the untarnished beauty of the (Divine) Presence.

However, in this world, its nobility lies in its preparation and suitability so that it may achieve true glory and nobility (in the Hereafter). If not, who is more deficient and wretched than he who is the prisoner of hunger, thirst, heat, cold, sickness, pain, dejection, sorrow, anger, and greed? All that gives him comfort is injurious to him; all that benefits him is bitter and painful.

As for the person who is noble and valued because of his knowledge, strength, power, ambition, will, or for his beauty and form:

If thou examinest his knowledge, who is more ignorant than he? For if one vein in his head should stir, he is in danger of death or insanity, yet he does not know from what he has come or what his end will be. It may be that he has the cure and sees it, but does not recognize it.

If thou examinest his power and strength, who is more helpless than he? He cannot overcome a fly! If a gnat is set over him, he is ruined at its hands. If a bee stings him, he will be sleepless and uneasy.

If thou examinest his ambition, he will become enraged and sorrowful for a trifling loss. If a single morsel should pass him by, he will faint with hunger. What can be more ignoble?

If thou examinest his beauty, it is a skin pulled over a dung heap! If he does not wash himself for two days, he will be disgraced so that it will be as though the odor of garlic and a stench are emanating from him. And what is more stinking and more disgraceful than that these are always inside him? He is their porter so that he must wash himself with his own hand twice a day.¹⁷⁴

One day Shaykh Abu Sa'id,¹⁷⁵ may God have mercy upon him, was walking with some Sufis. He came upon a toilet being cleaned. (The

¹⁷⁴ A reference to washing oneself with water after a bowel movement.

¹⁷⁵ Shaykh Abu Sa'id: Shaykh Abu Sa'id Fadl-allah (bin) Abi-l-Khayr Muhammad (bin) Ahmad Mayhani (AH357-440/968-1049CE); one of the most influential of early Sufis. He was one of the creators of "the pattern of thought which afterwards became

workmen) were throwing the filth out onto the road. (The Sufis) fled to one side and held their noses. The shaykh remained and said: "O people, know ye what this filth says to me? It says: 'I am that which was in the market yesterday. Everyone spent money from his purse upon me in order to obtain me. I did not remain with thee more than a night. I became like this so I had to flee from thee, or thou from me.'"

In truth, it is like this in this world. A person is extremely deficient, weak, and base and the morrow will be his market day. If he throws the alchemy of (spiritual) happiness upon the essence of his soul, he will travel from the degree of the beasts to the degree of the angels. If he turns to the world and the appetites of the world, a dog or a pig will be superior to him tomorrow. But, when they have become dust, they will be released from misery, while he will remain in agony. So, when he has come to know his nobility, he must recognize his own deficiencies, baseness, and helplessness. In this way, that self-knowledge is one of the keys to the knowledge of God Most High.

Let this suffice concerning self-knowledge, as it is not possible to include more in a book like this. *And with God is the success.*

universally famous in the writing of Sana'i, 'Attar, Rumi, Sa'di, Hafiz, Jami," etc. (A.J. Arberry, "Sufism" London, 1969) Of incalculable importance in the development of and articulation of Sufi ideas, he was both learned in all of the religious sciences of his day, and—according to all reports—was invested with extraordinary powers and compassion. His biography and stories about of his spiritual states may be found in the remarkable book *The Secrets of (God's) Unity (Asrār-al-Tawhīd)* by a descendant, Muhammad bin Munawwar Abi Sa'd. He was also a considerable poet.

THE SECOND TOPIC: KNOWING GOD, MAY HE BE GLORIFIED AND EXALTED

1. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SELF, THE KEY TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Know that in the books of the previous prophets there is this well-known saying that was said to them: *Know thyself and thou knowest thy Lord*. And in the Traditions and the writings, (the saying) *He who has known his self has known his Lord* is well known. All of these are evidence that the human self (*nafs*) is like a mirror: whoever looks into it sees God. But many people do not look at themselves and do not know God. Therefore, from the aspect that it is the mirror of spiritual knowledge, coming to know the (spiritual) self is obligatory. This has two aspects:

ONE is more obscure and most intellects cannot comprehend it. It cannot be explained to ordinary folk, nor is telling it (to them) proper.

THE OTHER, however, can be understood by everyone and it is this: that a person knows the existence of the essence of God, *may He be praised and glorified*, from his own essence. From his own attributes, he recognizes the attributes of God Most High. From his own control over the kingdom of his self, which is his body and limbs, he recognizes the God's control over all the world.

The explanation of this is that he knows himself, firstly, by his own existence, and he knows that before that—by some years—he was non-existent. There was neither his name, nor any trace of him. As God Most High asks: *Has there come upon man (ever) a time in which he was a thing unremembered?* (Q. 76:1) That which a human being discovers of his own creation is that he knows that before his own existence he was a droplet of semen, a drop of fetid water, in which there was no intellect, no power of hearing or sight, no head, hand, leg, tongue, or eyes. There were no veins, muscles, bones, flesh, or skin. Rather, he was fluid: white, homogeneous. Then, all of these wonders were made manifest in him!

Either he made them manifest himself, or someone else made them manifest for him. Since he necessarily knows that (even) in the stage of perfect maturity, he is unable to create a single strand of hair, he realizes that when he was but a droplet of semen he was even more helpless and deficient. Therefore, the essence of God Most High becomes known to him from the coming into existence of his own essence.

When he looks at his own body, externally and internally, as has been explained to some, he sees the power of his own Creator, and he knows that it is a perfect power which may create anything it wishes as it wishes. What power is more perfect than that (power) which creates such

a perfect and beautiful person, full of marvels and wonders, from such a mean, contemptible droplet of fluid?

When he looks at the prodigies of his own attributes and the benefits of his external limbs and organs—each of which was created for a special purpose, such as, among the external organs: the hands, the feet, the eyes, the tongue, the teeth; and among the internal organs: the liver, the spleen, the gall bladder, etc.—he recognizes the utter perfection of the knowledge of his Creator. It encompasses everything. He knows nothing can be unknown to such a Knower. If all the intellects of all thinkers were put together and they were given long lives so that they could apply themselves to the task of bringing out another aspect of any one of all these organs in their creation, better than it is, they would not be able to (do so)! If they wished, for example, to change the position of the teeth wherein the front teeth are sharp in order to cut food and the others are broad in order to grind the food, and the tongue is below to serve as a kind of miller's scoop throwing the food into the mill, and the power under the tongue which is like a flowing spring which produces saliva at the appropriate moment to moisten the food so that the throat may swallow it and it not lodge there, all the brains of the world could not make it more perfect or improve upon this procedure.

And in the same way, the hand has five fingers. Four are of one kind, and the thumb, which is set a little apart from them and is shorter, can work with or go atop any one of them. The fingers have three joints, the thumb but two. This is so that if some one wants to hold something, or to make a scoop or ladle of the hand, or to round it into a fist and make it a weapon, or to spread it and make it into a kind of sieve or tray, he can. It has many other uses as well. If all the intellects of the world want to consider a different manner for the placement of the fingers, so that they would be in a line, or three on one side and two on the other, or to make them six instead of five, or four, or make the three joints two or four, whatever they think and say, all will be deficient. The most perfect is that which God Most High has created.

From this it is obvious that the knowledge of the Creator encompasses this person and that He is Aware of everything. Thus, there is a wisdom in each part of a person. However much a person may increase his knowledge, his astonishment at the magnitude of God Most High's knowledge will increase (accordingly).

And when a person looks at his own needs for his limbs, then (the need) for food, clothing, and shelter; and the need of his food for rain, wind, clouds, cold, heat, and the tools which, with prudence, bring it forth; and the need of those tools for materials such as iron, wood, copper, bronze, etc.; and the need of those materials for direction and the knowledge of how to make them—then he looks: all of this has been created and made in the most perfect and best manner. And from each one, so many different kinds that would have been impossible to occur in

the mind of any person if not they had not been created (in him), nor would one have been able to ask for (them). Unsought and unknown, one sees them fashioned with grace and mercy. From this, another of His attributes is made known—the lives of all the saints are to that end—and that is the attribute of kindness, mercy, and care for all created beings. As He said: *My mercy surpasses My anger*;¹⁷⁶ and as the Prophet (S) said: “The compassion of God, may He be honored and glorified, for His servants is greater than that of a mother for her nursing child.”

Therefore, one sees the existence of the essence of God Most High in the manifestation of one’s own essence. One sees the perfection of His knowledge in the prodigies of wisdom in one’s own parts. And in the gathering of that which is necessary and needful for one or for one’s goodness and adornment, all of which one finds created with one, one sees the kindness and mercy of God Most High. In this way, knowledge of the self becomes the mirror and key to the (spiritual) knowledge of God, *may He be glorified and exalted!*

2. THE PURITY AND SANCTITY OF GOD

As one has come to know the attributes of God, *may He be glorified and exalted*, from one’s own attributes, and His essence from one’s own essence, one may know His transcendence¹⁷⁷ and sanctity and from one’s own purity and sanctity. The meaning of purity and sanctity with respect to the Creator Most High is that He is (absolutely) pure and sanctified beyond anything that can be conceived or imagined. He is (absolutely) transcendent, beyond the addition of any locality to Him, even though no locality is devoid of His control. A person sees the parallel of this in himself. The true nature of his life which we call the “soul” (*dil*) is beyond that which comes in fancy and imagination. For we have said that it has no measure or quantity, nor is it divisible. As that is the case, it has no color, and anything that has no color or measure does not occur to the imagination under any condition, for that which appears in the imagination is something that the eye has seen, or its type has been seen. There is nothing in the province of the eye and imagination except shapes and colors.

¹⁷⁶ A Divine Saying (*hadith-i qudsi*). It relates a revelation from God in the language of the Prophet.

¹⁷⁷ “transcendence”: *tanzih* and *munazzah* (“transcendent”) are the verbal noun and past participle of the second verbal form of the Arabic root *n-z-h*, which has the basic intransitive meaning of “being untouched, unblemished.” The second form makes this meaning transitive: “to deem or make something untouched, unblemished”; hence, “transcendence.” Thus, the past participle *munazzah* would mean “purified.” In Arabic, *tanzih* also has the technical meaning of “elimination of anthropomorphic elements from the conception of the Deity; deanthropomorphism.” With respect to God, Ghazzali is probably using the word in this sense.

When our nature demands: "What is the thing like?" the meaning of that is: "What shape does it have?" "Is it small or large?" But, for something that does not admit of such descriptions, questions of nature and quality are useless. If thou wishest to know: "Is it permissible that something exist which does not admit of shape and form?" look into the true nature of thyself. That true nature of thine, which is the locus of spiritual knowledge, is indivisible and is not touched by measurement, quantity, or quality. If someone asks: "What kind of a thing is the soul?" the answer is: "It does not admit (of questions about) (its) nature and quality."

As thou hast known thyself from these qualities, know that God, *may He be honored and glorified*, surpasses them in purity and sanctity. People find it strange that there is an ineffable and inscrutable Being; yet, they are the same themselves—but they do not recognize their selves. However, if a person searches his own body, he will find and see thousands of things, all of which are ineffable and inscrutable. In himself, he sees anger, he sees love, he sees pain, and he sees pleasure. If he desires to seek their nature and quality, he will not be able to do so; for such things have neither form nor color and there is no way to question them.

Indeed, if a person were to seek the true nature of sound, the true nature of smell, or the true nature of taste—their nature and quality—he will be incapable of doing so. The reason for this is that (questions of) how and why are the demands of the imagination obtained from the sense of sight which then seeks out everything which is the province of the eye. The eye has no part in that which is in the province of the ear, such as the voice, for example, and it is impossible for it to see the how and why of sound. The sound of a voice is beyond the province of the eye, just as color and form are beyond the province of the ear. In the same manner, that which the sensory organ of the soul perceives and which is known by the intellect is beyond the province of all of the (physical) senses. There is a quality and nature in perceptible things. This is an investigation and profundity which we have explained in books of discourses. Let this suffice for this book.

The point is that a person can come to know the ineffability and inscrutability of himself from the ineffability and inscrutability of God, *may He be glorified and exalted*. He may know that as the soul (*jān*)¹⁷⁸ exists and is the sovereign of the body, every part of the body for which there is a purpose and nature is all its kingdom. But, it is ineffable and inscrutable, just as the Sovereign of the universe is ineffable and

¹⁷⁸ Ghazzali uses the word *jān* that usually means "life," instead of *dil*, which he has been using for "soul." However, the word *jān* admits a meaning of soul, also.

inscrutable. All things that possess purpose and description, such as perceptible things, all are of His kingdom.

Another kind of transcendence is that which is not attributed to any place. The soul¹⁷⁹ cannot be attributed to any organ. One cannot say that it is in the hand, in the foot, in the head, or in some other place; indeed, all of the limbs of the body may be divided, but it is not divisible. It is impossible for the indivisible to alight in the divisible, for then it also becomes divisible. Though it does not accept attribution to any organ, no organ is free from its authority. Indeed, all of them are controlled by it and obey its command. It is the king of them all, just as the world is under the control of the King of the world, and He is above being ascribed to any particular place.

The totality of this kind of sanctification becomes manifest when thou speakest of the special quality and mystery of the soul (*rūh*). There is no permission to speak of the special quality and mystery of the soul. The totality of that is made manifest (by the words): *Verily God Most High created man in His image.*

3. THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S MANAGEMENT OF HIS KINGDOM

Now that the existence of the essence of God Most High has been made known; His attributes, and His freedom from and sanctity beyond (questions of) how and why have been made known; and His immunity from ascription to a locality and the key to all spiritual knowledge of the human self made known; one aspect of knowledge remains: that is the knowledge of the nature of His management of His rule in His kingdom and in what manner it is accomplished. How are such things as His commanding the angels and their obedience to Him, the management of affairs by the angels, the sending of commands from heaven to earth, the movement of the heavens and the stars, the tying the affairs of the earth's inhabitants to the heavens, and the entrusting of the key of sustenance to heaven carried out?

This is a tremendous chapter in the spiritual knowledge of the Creator Most High. It is called the "Spiritual Knowledge of the Acts," as much as earlier (we spoke of) the "Spiritual Knowledge of the Essence" and the "Spiritual Knowledge of Attributes." The key to this, too, is the spiritual knowledge of the self. If thou dost not know how thou rulest in thine own kingdom, how canst thou expect to understand how the Ruler of the universe manages affairs?

Firstly, come to know thyself and one of thine own activities, say, for example, writing. If thou wishest to write the words "In the name of God" (*bismillāh*) on a piece of paper, first the desire and will to do so

¹⁷⁹ "soul" (*jan*): or "vital spirit."

appear in thee. Then a motion and movement occurs in thy heart (*dil*), not the outward heart of flesh situated towards the left inside of thy breast. A tenuous substance moves from the heart (or soul) and travels to the brain. This tenuous substance is what the physicians call "spirit" (*rūḥ*) and it carries the powers of perception and motion. This is a different spirit from that which the beasts (also) have and which is susceptible to death. That different spirit, which the beasts do not have, we call the "soul" (*dil*) and it never perishes. It is the seat of the knowledge of God.

So, when this spirit reaches the brain and the image of "In the name of God" has been found in the repository at the front of the brain, which is the location of the faculty of the imagination, the result is transferred from the brain to the nerves which come out of the brain and reach in all directions and are linked to the fingertips like threads—they are visible on the forearm of a lean person. Then, the nerves quicken and activate the fingertips. The fingers move the pen and the pen moves the ink. Then the shape of *bismillāh* appears on the paper, just as it was in the repository of the imagination, with the aid of the senses, especially the eyes which are necessary for writing. Consequently, the initiator of this action was the desire, which appeared in thee. The beginning of all works is an attribute from among the attributes of God, one of which is Will.

Just as the first effect of this will appears in thy soul (*dil*), then by its means the effect reaches other places, so the first effect of the Will of God Most High appears on the Throne, then it goes to other places. Just as that tenuous substance, resembling vapor, is transported by the conduits of the heart to the brain—the substance we call "spirit" (*rūḥ*), God Most High has a tenuous essence that transports the effect from the Throne to the Pedestal. That essence is called an "angel,"¹⁸⁰ "spirit," or "the Holy Spirit."¹⁸¹ As it reaches the brain from the heart and the brain is under the control of the soul, and in its province and at its command, so the effect of the (God's) Will reaches the Pedestal from the Throne of God Most High, and the Pedestal is beneath the Throne.

Even as the form of *bismillāh*, which was thy action and is thine object, appears in the repository at the front of the brain and the action is in accordance with that, the form of all which will appear in the world first appears on the Preserved Tablet.¹⁸² And as the tenuous faculty which is in the brain activates the nerves to activate the hand and the fingers so that the fingers may cause the pen to move, so does the tenuous essence in charge of the Throne and the Pedestal cause the sky, together with the stars, to move.

¹⁸⁰ "angel": *firishtah*, literally, "sent." This is the common word for "angel" in Persian.

¹⁸¹ Or: "the Holy Ghost" (*Rūḥ al-Qudus*).

¹⁸² See Note 147.

And as the faculty of the brain through the connections of bones and nerves moves the fingers, that tenuous essence, which we call the angels, sets the dispositions of the elements¹⁸³ of the world by means of celestial bodies and their links of light beams to the lower world. They are called the four temperaments: heat, cold, moisture, and dryness.

And as the pen scatters the ink and forms it until the shape of *bismillāh* appears, this heat, cold, water, and earth moves the elements of these compounds. And as the paper receives the ink as it is spread upon it or collected, moistness enables the ink to be shaped while dryness becomes the keeper of that shape, preserving it, and does not let go of it. If there were no moistness, (the ink) could not be shaped (into words), and if there were no dryness, (the shape) could not be preserved.

And, when the pen has finished its work completely and brought its movements to an end, the form of *bismillāh* in accordance with the design that was in the repository of imagination appears with the aid of the eye. In the same manner, as heat and cold bring the elements of the ink into motion, the forms of plants, animals, etc. come into existence in this world through the agency of the angels in accordance with the image which is on the Preserved Tablet.

As the beginning of the action in all of the body springs from the soul and then is distributed to all the organs, so the beginning of the works in the world of physical bodies appears in the Throne. And, as the first receiver of that quality is the soul and the rest beneath it are attached to the soul so that it is thought that thou residest in thy soul, since the mastery of God Most High is by means of the Throne, it is thought that He resides in the Throne.

And, as thou hast gained mastery over thy soul and its affairs have been arranged, thou canst manage the kingdom of thy body. In the same way, when God Most High, with the creation of the Throne, became the Master of the Throne, The Throne stood straight and even. The management of (His) kingdom was arranged and the words came thus: *He established Himself upon the Throne, directing all things.* (Q. 10:3)

Know that all of this is truth and it has been made known to the perspicacious through external revelation, and the truth of this meaning was learned: *Truly God, may He be Honored and Glorified, created Man in His image.*

And know truly that no one other than kings knows kingship and sovereignty. If it were not that thou hadst been given rule over thine own kingdom (of the body), and given a brief copy of the kingship of the Lord of the Universe, thou wouldst never be able to comprehend the God

¹⁸³ "elements": *ummahāt*, literally, "mothers." Ghazzali is referring here to the four maternal or elementary qualities (*ummahāt-i chahār arkān*, *ummahāt-i suflā*) in man.

of the world. So, give thanks to that King Who created thee and gave thee a dominion and a kingdom, a proof-giver of His own kingdom, and for the soul that He made as thy Throne. He has made the animal spirit, the source of which is the soul, thine Israfil.¹⁸⁴ He has made the brain thy Pedestal and, out of thy repository of imaginings, a Preserved Tablet. He has made thy angels out of thine eyes and ears and all of thy senses. He has made thy sky and stars out of the dome of the brain, which is the source of the nerves of soul (*dil*). He has subordinated the elements to thy fingers and pen and ink. He has created thee unique, ineffable, and inscrutable, and has made thee the king over all. Then, He said to thee: "Take care! Neglect thy self and thy rule, for thou wilt have neglected thine own Creator! *For verily God created Man in His image; so know that and know thyself, O human being, and thou wilt know thy Lord.*"

4. THE OBJECT OF THE EXPLANATION OF THE COMPARISON OF HUMAN SOVEREIGNTY WITH THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

So, in all of this which was been said in explanation of the equaling of human sovereignty with the sovereignty of God Most High, reference has been made to two kinds of tremendous knowledge:

One is the knowledge of the human self, and the nature of the connection between human organs to its powers and attributes, and the nature of the connection of its attributes and powers to the soul. This is a lengthy study, the verification of which cannot be discussed in such a book as this.

The other concerns the relationship of the kingdom of the King of the World to the angels, the relationship of the angels to one another, and the relationship of the heavens, the Throne, and the Pedestal to them. That study is even lengthier.

The object of these intimations is that he who is astute should believe in all of these things and, through that (belief), come to know the greatness of God Most High. As for him who is dull-witted, he should know at least this much in order to appreciate how negligent and how defrauded he is to be deprived of the contemplation of such a Presence with so much beauty. What knowledge have people of the beauty of the Divine Presence itself? And what is this much that has been said (here) so that people may be able to understand?

¹⁸⁴ Israfil: the archangel who will sound the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection.

5. THE PARABLE OF THE NATURALIST, THE ASTROLOGER, AND THE ANTS

The helpless, execrable naturalist and the deprived astrologer assign affairs to (aspects of) nature and the stars! They are like ants traveling over a piece of paper. They see the paper and they watch it become black and the patterns emerge upon it. They see the pen point and they become glad, exclaiming: "We know the truth of this matter! The pen is making this drawing!" This is a natural metaphor of their not knowing anything about motions except the lowest part.

Then, another ant comes upon the scene whose eyes are wider and able to see farther. He says: "Thou art mistaken. I see that this pen is being used; I see something else beyond it making the drawing." This pleased him, and he continued: "The truth is that I have learned that the artist is a finger, not the pen. The pen is controlled by the finger."

This is the likeness of the astrologer who sees even farther: He has learned that nature is controlled by the celestial bodies, but he has not learned that the celestial bodies are controlled by the angels at levels beyond, which he has not penetrated.

Just as this disparity has occurred between the astrologer and the naturalist in the physical world and from it a dispute, the same dispute that has arisen between those who have progressed in the world of spirits. For most people who have progressed from the physical world and have found something outside of physical bodies have halted at the first step and the way to the ascension to the world of spirits has been closed to them. In the world of spirits, which is the world of lights, there are steep passes and many veils (covering) the stairs. Some steps are like the stars, others are like the moon, and others like the sun. And these steps of the ascension are for those to whom the Kingdom of the Heavens is shown; as God, may He be praised and exalted, said about Abraham: *And thus We showed Abraham the Kingdom of the Heavens and the Earth*, (Q. 6:75) to the point where He said: *Lo! I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth.* (Q. 6:79)¹⁸⁵ And it was for this reason that the Prophet (S) said: *God has seventy veils of light; if He removed them, the splendors of His countenance would*

¹⁸⁵ The full text of the passage Ghazzali is referring to is: *And thus We showed Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth that he might be of those possessing certainly; When the night grew dark upon him he beheld a star. He said: This is my Lord. But when it set, he said: I love not things that set. And when he saw the moon uprising, he exclaimed: This is my Lord. But when it set, he said: Unless my Lord guide me, I surely shall become one of the folk who are astray. And when he saw the uprising, he cried: This is my Lord! This is greater! And when it set he exclaimed: O my people! Lo! I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth.* (Q. 6:75-79)

consume with fire all who gaze upon Him. We have explained this in the book *Mishkatul Anwar wa Misfatul Asrar*. One should refer to it.¹⁸⁶

The point is that thou understand that the poor naturalist who assigns everything to heat and cold is right: if they were not the intermediaries for divine causes, medical science would be useless. But he has made a mistake due to his shortsightedness and did not return to the way. He halted at the first landing stage and made of it a foundation, not a thing to be used;¹⁸⁷ he made it a lord, not a servant, while it is one of the lowest of servants—in the rank of footgear.¹⁸⁸

And the astrologer was correct about including the stars among the causes. If that were not so, day and night would be the same, for the sun is a star, the source of the light and warmth of the world. And winter and summer would be the same, for the heat of summer is because (the sun) is near the zenith of the sky, while in winter it is farther away.¹⁸⁹ And that Lord Who has the power to create such a hot and bright sun; would it be strange if He created Saturn cold and dry, and He created Venus hot and moist? This does not detract from Islam. But the astrologer has erred where he has made of the stars the first principle and locus of empowerment and has not realized or understood that *the sun and the moon and the stars are subservient to His command*. (Q. 7:54)

Something subservient is that which is employed by others. Hence, (the stars) are workers, not for themselves, but are employed as the agents of the angels, just as the nerves are used to activate parts (of

¹⁸⁶ *Mishkāt al-Anwār wa Miṣfāt al-Asrār*: "The Niche for Lights. Translated by W.H.T. Gairdner. London, 1924, and reprinted by Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, Pakistan, 1952. [See also al-Ghazzali's *The Niche of Lights*, translated by David Buchman. Brigham Young University, 1998, in a bi-lingual edition.] Oddly, HK lists this as No. 52 in his chronological list of the works of Ghazzali, after *The Alchemy*, which is No. 45.

¹⁸⁷ That is, because of their short-sightedness, they thought that the first stage of knowledge was the goal, not a step to the higher stages.

¹⁸⁸ The lowest rank in an assembly, where the shoes are taken off and left.

¹⁸⁹ At midday on the summer solstice the sun is at the highest point it will reach in the sky during the year, while on the winter solstice it is at the lowest point it will reach at midday. The Tropic of Cancer represents the northernmost latitude at which the sun is directly overhead. How high it would actually go in other locales depends on the latitude of the observer. All of Iran and Iraq (where Ghazzali was active) lies north of the Tropic of Cancer; consequently, the sun would never be directly overhead. However Ghazzali could have seen it overhead if he happened to be at Makkah during the summer solstice as Makkah lies a little south of the Tropic of Cancer.

The distance between the earth and the sun is actually greater when it is summer in the Northern Hemisphere. However, because of the inclination of the axis of the earth responsible for the seasons, the rays of the sun travel a shorter distance through the earth's atmosphere, delivering more heat during the Northern summer, even though the distance between earth and sun is greater. It is the distance traveled by the sun's rays through the atmosphere that accounts for the seasons. In summer, it is shorter and therefore more intense, in winter, longer and less intense. In this sense, Ghazzali's cosmology is correct.

the body) by the power that is in the brain. The stars are among the lowliest of servants, even though they are at the level of captains like the four temperaments, and not at the level of shoes. They are like lowly servants, resembling (the relationship of) the pen to writing.

6. THE CAUSE OF DISPUTE AMONGST PEOPLE

Most disputes amongst people are like this: they all may have spoken the truth from one aspect of the truth; but they see some part and suppose that they have seen all. They are like the group of blind men who had heard that an elephant had come to their city. They went to learn about it, believing that they could comprehend it by touch. They laid their hands on the beast. The hand of one felt an ear, another a foot, another a thigh, and another a tusk. When they (later) encountered some other blind persons and were asked by them to describe the elephant, the one who had felt the leg said: "An elephant is like a pillar." The one who had felt the ear said: "It is like a carpet." Then the one who had touched the tusk said: "It is like stone." They were all speaking the truth, and they were all in error. They thought they had felt all of the elephant, but they had not.

Thus it is with the astrologer and the physician. The eye of each has fallen upon one of the servants of the Divine Presence. They have been amazed by its dominion and hegemony. Each said: "This is my king. *This is my Lord*," (Q. 6:76) until that person to whom the way had been opened saw its deficiency and That Other behind it. He said: "This is under the Other. That which is beneath is not fit to be God. *I love not things which set*." (Q. 6:76)¹⁹⁰

7. THE LIKENING OF THE STARS AND THE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC TO A ROYAL ESTABLISHMENT

The similitude of the stars, temperaments, and the constellations of the zodiac—which is divided into twelve parts—and the Throne, which is behind everything, is that of a king who has a private chamber in which his chief minister sits. There are screens around that chamber into which twelve windows have been let. At each window, one of the minister's deputies sits. Seven mounted captains patrol around these windows and listen to the instructions of the deputy that have been received from the minister. Four foot soldiers stand below (each of) the seven captains, their eyes fixed upon him, awaiting his excellency's command. Four lassoes have been placed in the hands of these four so that they may throw them. Some are sent to his presence by decree, and

¹⁹⁰ See Note 185 above and the preceding chapter of the Prolegomena.

others are turned away from his presence. Some are receiving robes of honor, and others are being punished.

The Throne is a private chamber, the office of the chief minister of the kingdom. He is the closest angel.¹⁹¹ That pavilion is the starry firmament. The twelve windows are the signs of the zodiac. The deputies of the chief minister are other angels who are lower in rank than the closest angels are. Each one of them has been assigned a task. The seven horsemen are the Seven Stars¹⁹² who, like captains, always circle the windows and receive different kinds of commands from each of them. What we call the four elements—water, fire, earth, and air—are like the four footmen who do not travel from their own country. And the four temperaments—heat, cold, moisture, and dryness—are like the four lassoes in their hands.

For example, should a person's condition change and he turn his face away from the world; should anxiety and fear overwhelm his soul, and the blessing of the world become unpleasant to him; should he concern himself with the anxiety of the consequence of his actions, a doctor will say: "He is sick, and the cause is melancholia. The treatment is a decoction of dodder of thyme."

The naturalist will say: "The origin of this illness springs from a dry nature which is dominating his brain. The cause of this dryness is the winter air. He cannot be improved until spring comes and moisture overcomes the air."

The astrologer will say: "It is a black bile which has appeared in him. Black bile arises from the planet Mercury. It comes when (Mercury) is in an illaudable configuration with Mars. This condition will not be cured until Mercury conjuncts with the two Auspicious Planets (Jupiter and Venus) and Mars,¹⁹³ or they make a trine."¹⁹⁴ They all speak correctly, but *that is the limit of their knowledge*.

However, that which has been decreed in the Divine Presence for his happiness—two quick and knowledgeable captains, who are called Mercury and Mars,¹⁹⁵ have been sent rushing to one of the foot soldiers, the one who is called Air,¹⁹⁶ (commanding him) to shoot from the bow

¹⁹¹ "closest angel(s)" (*muqarrabīn*): sometimes equated with the cherubim of the Old Testament.

¹⁹² The constellation of Ursa Major (the Big Dipper) that is always visible on a clear night in northern latitudes and pivots on the axis of the North Star.

¹⁹³ That is, until the three planets are all in the same sign of the zodiac. "The two Auspicious Planets" are Jupiter and Venus.

¹⁹⁴ Trine: When three planets are equidistant from each other on the ecliptic or zodiac; that is, they are from each other separated by 120 degrees of the circle of the zodiac.

¹⁹⁵ The reference is to the planets, not the Graeco-Roman gods after whom they have been named.

¹⁹⁶ "air" (*hawā*): one of the four elements mentioned above.

(an arrow) of Dryness¹⁹⁷ that strikes (the afflicted person's) head and brain to turn him away from the pleasures of the world and, with the scourges of fear and anxiety and the reins of will and seeking, to summon him to the Divine Presence—this is not in medicine or nature or in the stars. Rather, it exudes from the ocean of the knowledge of prophethood that encompasses all sides of the kingdom and all the agents, captains, and servants of the Lord. It is recognized who is responsible for which task, who acts upon which order, whither the people are summoned, and whence they are turned back.

So, what each one had said was true, but they had no knowledge of the secret of the ruler of the kingdom, nor of the secret of all of the kingdom's chief commanders. In this fashion, with misfortune, illness, and hardship, God Most High summons the people to the Divine Presence and says: "This is not an illness; it is the lasso of grace with which We summon Our Own saints to Our Presence: *For misfortune engages the prophets and then the saints and then next and the next.*"¹⁹⁸ Do not look at them with the eyes of the sick, for they are Ours; *I was ill and thou didst not visit me* with respect to them comes with this.

Thus the previous parable is the manner of a human's sovereignty in his own body, and this parable is also the manner of his own kingdom outside of his own body. With this spiritual knowledge too, he also obtains spiritual knowledge of himself. It was for this reason that we made the Spiritual Knowledge of the Self our first Topic.

8. CONCERNING KNOWLEDGE OF THE MEANING OF THE FOUR GLORIFICATIONS¹⁹⁹

Now it is time for thee to learn the meaning of *Glory be to God, praise be to God, there is no god but God, and God is greater*. These four statements are brief and a comprehensive (summary) of the knowledge of the Divine.

When thou hast learned of His transcendence from thine own transcendence, thou hast learned (the meaning of) *Glory be to God*.

When thou hast learned the details of His sovereignty—that all causes and means are in its service as is a pen in the hand of a scribe—from thine own sovereignty, thou hast learned the meaning of *Praise be to God*; as there is no benefactor other than He, there is no praise and gratitude for other than He.

When thou hast learned there is no one other than He to command His own secret, thou hast learned (the meaning of) *There is no god but God*.

¹⁹⁷ "dryness" (*khushki*): one of the four temperaments mentioned above.

¹⁹⁸ "and the next and the next" (*thumma-l'amthal fa-l'amthal*), and so on down the line.

¹⁹⁹ "the Four Glorifications": *tasbiḥāt-i chahār-gānah*.

Now it is the time for thee to come to know the meaning of *God is Greater* and to know that with all this that thou hast known about God Most High, thou hast not known anything; for the meaning of the *Allāhu akbar* that thou sayest is "God is Greater." The true nature of this is greater than that people will be able to learn by comparison with themselves. It does not mean that He is greater²⁰⁰ than everything else is, for there is nothing with Him for Him to be greater than. All existing things exist through the light of His existence. For the light of the sun is nothing other than the sun; one cannot say that the sun is greater than its own light! Indeed, the meaning of *God is Greater* is that He is greater than anything by which man can know Him by logical analogy.

God forbid that His sanctity and His Purity be like that of a human being, for He is free of resemblance to created things, much less man! *God forbid* that His sovereignty be like that of a human being over his own body; or that His attributes, such as knowledge and power, be likened to those of a man. Rather, all of these are illustrations so that a person, in accordance with human weakness, may in fact comprehend something of the beauty of the Divine Presence.

And the parable of this illustration is this: If a child ask us: "What is the pleasure of directorship, sovereignty, or running a kingdom like?" we say to him: "It is like hitting the ball with a polo stick or playing with a ball." (A child) knows nothing of pleasure, except such things. What he cannot grasp, we teach him by analogy to what he can (grasp). It is obvious that the pleasure of sovereignty is not in proportion to the pleasure of playing polo, but we may apply the words "pleasure" and "delight" to both. So, in name—from the point of view of that which they convey—they are same. For this reason, this illustration is suitable for children. Think of the function of these parables and illustrations in the same way. No one knows God perfectly and truly, save He Himself.

9. FOLLOWING THE RELIGIOUS LAW IS THE WAY OF HAPPINESS

An explanation of the knowledge of God Most High is lengthy and cannot be put in a book like this, as it would not be satisfying. Let this much suffice as a warning and as an encouragement to seek the perfection of this spiritual knowledge, as much as human capacity permits, for the perfection of (spiritual) happiness lies in that. Indeed, a

²⁰⁰ "larger": in Arabic *akbar* is the comparative form of *kabīr* meaning (to quote Wehr) "great, big, large, sizable; bulky, voluminous, spacious; extensive, comprehensive; significant, considerable, formidable, huge, vast, enormous; powerful, influential, distinguished, eminent; important, old." When used with reference to God, it does not refer to physical size (Ghazzali's point here); rather it refers to His power, influence, and eminence.

person's (spiritual) happiness is in spiritual knowledge and in His service and worship.

An aspect of spiritual knowledge's being human happiness has been discussed above. As for the aspect that service and worship are causes of human happiness: when a person dies, his affair will be with God. *To Him are the return and the destination.* For any person who has to remain with another, his happiness lies in his loving the other. However much more he loves that person, his happiness is (that much) greater, because the pleasure and comfort of seeing his beloved is increased. The love of God Most High does not master a soul (*dil*) except through spiritual knowledge and much remembrance (of God).²⁰¹ Every one who loves another remembers him very often. The more he mentions that person, the more he loves him.²⁰² It is for this reason that the revelation came to David (A): *I am thy necessary remedy, so attend thy remedy.*²⁰³ That is: "I am thy succor, I shall take care of thy affair. Do no neglect to remember Me for one moment."

Remembrance (of God) dominates the soul when one perseveres in acts of worship; the quiet of worship comes then and is obtained at that time when the bonds of carnal appetites are severed from the soul. The bonds of the carnal appetites are severed by abstaining from sins. As a result, the abstention from sin is the cause of the quietude of the soul, while performing devotion (to God) is the cause of the victory of remembrance. Both of these are the causes of that love which is the seed of (spiritual) happiness, and it is called "success."²⁰⁴ As God Most High said: *He is successful who causes something to grow and remembers the name of his Lord, so pray.* (Q. 86:14-15)

²⁰¹ When use with respect to God, *dhikr* usually refers to a particular kind of meditation involving recitation of the Names, etc. It has a more general meaning of "mention, remembrance." Ghazzali uses the term first with respect to God and then—in the following sentence—with respect to human relationships, the first with a suggestion of both meanings, hence "remembrance" here.

²⁰² As noted in the Translator's Preface (q.v.), the fact that Persian does not have gender pronouns complicates the translation of this passage. The third-person pronoun *u* or, in another form *way*, can mean either he or she, or him or her, as the case may be. In translation, without a specific indication that the subject is female, it is customary to render it as "he/him" in accordance with the English use of the general indefinite masculine. In addition, the Persian verbal phrase for "to love" (*dūst dāshtan*) is not so restricted as the English word "love," and can mean "like," as well. It includes love between the sexes as well as strong friendship without respect to gender. In this translation, "love" is usually used, with a meaning similar to that of the Greek *agape*, translated as "love" in the King James Version of the New Testament.

²⁰³ Though Ghazzali calls this passage "revelation," it is not from the Quran. It is a term he uses through *The Alchemy of Happiness* when referring to non-Quranic revelations to prophets other than Muhammad (S).

²⁰⁴ The word "success" (*falāḥ*) occurs in the call to formal prayer (*adhān*) in the phrase *ḥayya 'alā l-falāḥ* (Come to success!).

As all acts cannot be worship—rather, some may and others not—it is not possible to refrain from all the appetites. It is not lawful to stop eating, for if one does not eat, one will die; and if one does not have sexual intercourse, there will be no progeny. So, while it is appropriate to restrain some appetites, others should be satisfied. Therefore, one should be separated from the other by a limit.

This limit is not devoid of two conditions which a human being gets either through his own intellect, desire, and independent judgment;²⁰⁵ or from another. It is impossible that it should be left to his choice or independent judgment. Why? Because his desire will master him and always conceal the way to God from him. Whatever he desires will appear in the image of correctness. Therefore, the reins of choice should not be placed in his hands; rather, they should be in the hands of another. But, just anyone is not fit for this; instead, he should be of the most perspicacious of men. And they are the prophets, may the God bless them all.

Thus, by necessity, following the Divine Law and observing the boundaries of its rules are necessary on the road to (spiritual) happiness. That is the meaning of service. Anyone who exceeds the limits set by religion in his behavior falls into the danger of destruction. For this reason God Most High said: *And he who transgresses God's limits, verily he wrongs his soul.* (Q. 65:1)

10. THE ERROR AND IGNORANCE OF THE LIBERTINES

Those who are Libertines²⁰⁶ have erroneously abrogated the limits of God's command. Their ignorance has seven forms:

THE FIRST FORM is the ignorance of some who do not believe in (the existence of) God, *may He be honored and glorified*. Why? Because they have searched for Him in the treasury of imagination and whim and sought His quality and nature. Since they have not found (these), they deny Him and have shunted matters to the stars and physical nature. They have supposed that this (human) person and the other animate beings—this marvelous world with all of its wisdom and arrangement, has come into existence by itself, or has itself always existed; or that it is a natural accident, having no knowledge of itself much less anything else! They are like the person who looks at a specimen of fine writing

²⁰⁵ "independent judgment": *ijtihād*, from the same Arabic root as *jihād* (j-h-d). *Ijtihād* has a general meaning of "effort, striving," and also a technical meaning of independent judgment in religious law and theological matters, a stage achieved only after considerable study and reflection. Ghazzali chooses the word because of this double implication.

²⁰⁶ "Libertines" (*ibāḥat*): See Note 165.

and thinks that it wrote itself without (the hand of) an able, knowledgeable, and willing scribe; or that it has always existed so written! How can a person so utterly blind perceive the way of (spiritual) happiness? The manner of the error of the naturalist and the astrologer has been discussed above.²⁰⁷

THE SECOND FORM is some people's ignorance of the Hereafter. They have decided that man is like a plant or other animals. When he dies, he becomes non-existent. There is no castigation for him, no punishment, and no spiritual reward. The cause of this (position) is (their) ignorance of the one's own self. They know themselves as they know donkeys, cattle, or plants. They do not know the soul (*rūḥ*) which is the reality of man! That is everlasting and never dies, but the body will be taken back from him. That is called "death." The truth of this will be discussed in the Fourth topic, *if God Most High wills it*.

THE THIRD FORM is the ignorance of those persons who believe in God and in the Hereafter, (but) with a weak belief. However, they do not understand the significance of the Religious Law. They say: "What does God, *may He be exalted and glorified*, need of my worship, and what harm is there in my sinning? He is a King and able to do without the people's worship. (My) worship and sin are the same to Him." And these ignoramuses still see that in the Quran He says: *And he who purifies himself, purifies himself only for his own good*; (Q. 35:18) *And whoever strives hard, strives hard for himself*; (Q. 29:6) *Whoever does good, it is for his own soul!* (Q. 41:46)

This backslider is ignorant of the Religious Law; he supposes that the meaning of the Religious Law is that work must be done on behalf of God Most High, not for oneself. It is as though a sick man does not abstain (from something injurious) and says: "What difference does it make to the doctor whether I obey his orders or not?" This is correct, but (the sick man) perishes, not because of the need of a doctor; but because his way to ruin was in not abstaining. The doctor had guided him and showed him the way. How does the guide²⁰⁸ suffer loss when (the sick man) destroys himself? Just as an illness of the body is the cause of destruction in this world, so an illness of the soul will cause wretchedness in the next world. And, just as medicine and self-restraint are the cause of bodily health, so devotion, spiritual knowledge, and abstention from sin are the cause of spiritual health. *None will be saved except him who brings to God a sound heart.*" (Q. 26:89)²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ See Chapter 5 of Topic Three above.

²⁰⁸ "guide": the doctor.

²⁰⁹ Only the Arabic between the quotation marks is from the Quran.

THE FOURTH FORM is also the ignorance of some people of the Religious Law, but from another aspect. They have said: "The Law has been ordained in order to cleanse the soul of anger, carnal appetite, and hypocrisy; but this is not possible, because man has been created from these. This is just like a person who wants to change the color of a black carpet to white! Busying oneself with such a task is to seek the impossible."

These fools did not know that that was not the reason for the enjoining of the Religious Law. Rather, it was enjoined (upon us) to control anger and carnal passion and to hold them in check so that they do not overcome the Law and reason, so that they not become mutinous, to preserve the limits of the Law and to avoid major sins, so that He may forgive us our minor sins. This is possible and many persons have achieved this.

The Prophet (S) did not say: "There must not be anger and there must not be carnal appetite." He had nine wives and used to say: "*I am a human being. I anger as human beings anger.*" And God Most High said: *They control their anger and are forgiving toward mankind.* (Q. 3:134) He praised the person who swallows his anger, not the person who has no anger itself.

THE FIFTH FORM is those persons' ignorance of God Most High's attributes. They say: "God Most High is merciful and generous. He will show mercy to us with each of His attributes." They do not know just as He is generous, He is harsh in His punishment. They do not see that even though He is generous and merciful, many people in this world are afflicted, ill, and hungry. They do not see that so long as they do not cultivate the land or engage in business, they obtain no wealth; or that until they make the effort, they do not learn. They make no omission when it comes to seeking (the wealth) of this world and they do not say: "God Most High is generous and merciful. He will give us our sustenance without working the land or engaging in trade," even though God Most High has guaranteed our sustenance and says: *And there is not a beast on the earth but the sustenance thereof depends upon God.* (Q. 11:6) and entrusts the affair of the Hereafter to action, saying: *And man has only that for which he makes an effort.* (Q. 53:39) Since they do not believe in His generosity, they do not cease from seeking the wealth of the world and the world itself. That which they say concerning the Hereafter is on the tip of the tongue and inspired by Satan, and is not genuine.

THE SIXTH FORM is their ignorance of their own pride. Their vanity is that they say: "We have attained a degree in which our sins are

not the cause of loss. Our religion has become two jugs of water²¹⁰ and cannot be tainted." Most of these fools, since they are worthless, will harbor a lifelong enmity for anyone who diminishes their self-opinion or demolishes their pride by a word. Should a single morsel of that which they covet slip by them, their world becomes narrow and dark. And when did the pretensions of these simpletons, who have not yet become two jugs of water in manliness and who pay no attention to such things, become uncontested?

So, if, for example, a person has also become thus so that enmity, appetite, hypocrisy, and anger do not approach him; he is also deluded by this claim. What? Does his rank surpass that of the prophets? They used to lament and weep for their mistakes and sins, and worked to atone for them. The friends of the Companions (of the Prophet) shunned minor sins; indeed, out of fear of suspicion, they fled from what is lawful! So, how does this fool know that he has not been duped by Satan? And (does he dare to think that) his rank has surpassed theirs?

If one says: "The prophets were like that, but what they were doing, they were doing for the good of the people"; then why does he not do the same for the good of the people when he sees that everyone he is looking at is being corrupted? If one says: "The corruption of the people does not harm me"; then why did it hurt the Prophet (S)? If there was no harm, why did he keep himself in the torment of the fear of God and throw down a single date because it had given in charity for the poor? If he had eaten it, how would those people, for whom the eating of it would have been lawful, have been harmed? If there were a harm in that, why would cups of (unlawful) wine not harm that fool?

Indeed! His degree is not above that of the Messenger of God (S), no more than the degree of hundred cups of wine (would be) over the degree of a single date! So, how does he posit himself to be an ocean so that a hundred cups of wine will not corrupt him, while he posits the Messenger to be a mere jug of water that would be corrupted by a single date? It is a time when Satan plays with his whiskers and the fools of the world make an object of ridicule out of him. He is a fool about whom the intelligent tell stories or at whom they laugh.

However, it is the great ones of religion who recognize that he who has not imprisoned his passion is not a man. Instead, he is a beast of burden. They know this in this way, that the human self is cunning and deceitful. He makes a false claim who boasts: "(My carnality) is under my control and I am superior to it." Ask him to prove it. Of course, there is no proof of his rectitude other than that (the self) is not under its own

²¹⁰ "two jugs of water" (*dū qullah*): It is the minimum amount of water considered by the Shafi'ite school to be necessary for purification, provided that its color, taste, and smell are not altered. In other words, these people assert that their faith is above pollution by externals. They consider themselves above contamination by sin.

rule, but under the rule of Religious Law. If he always devotes himself to its obedience, then he is speaking the truth. If he is always looking for leniency, (specious) interpretation, or tricks.²¹¹ He is the servant of Satan even though he pretends to sainthood. This proof must be sought from him until his last breath; if not, he will become haughty and deceived. He will be ruined and not know it. The dedication of the self to following the Religious Law is still the first step of being a Muslim.

THE SEVENTH FORM arises from heedlessness and the carnal appetite, not from ignorance. The Libertines are a people who have passed over these misgivings. They have not heard anything themselves, but a group are seen traveling the road of libertinism, immoral behavior, and uttering spurious things. They claim to be Sufis and saints and wear their garments. This suits their nature, for it has been conquered by carnal appetite and sloth. They are not content with behaving immorally and saying: "We shall be punished for this," for then immorality would be bitter to their souls. Instead, they say: "This is not really immorality; it is just a groundless accusation and talk."

They do not know the meaning of "accusation" or of "talk." This is a man heedless and full of carnal appetite. Satan finds his gratification in him. He will not be corrected with speech, because his doubts have not come from speech. Most of these people are among those about whom God Most High said: *Lo! We have placed coverings on their hearts so that they understand not, and in their ears a deafness. And though thou call them to the guidance, but they will never be led aright. (Q. 18:57) And when thou rememberest thy Lord alone in the Quran, they turn their backs in disdain. (Q. 17:46)* Therefore, dealing with such people is done better by the sword than by the argument of reason.

Let this much suffice about the scandal of the Libertines. In this Topic it has been said that the reason for all these things is the ignorance of one's own self, or the ignorance of God, or the ignorance about traveling the Way, called the Religious Law, from the self to God. When such ignorance is in agreement with (one's) nature, it can only be expunged with difficulty.

It is for this reason that there is a group of people who travel the road of Libertinism without any doubt and say: "We are perplexed." If thou sayest to one of them: "By what art thou perplexed?" he cannot say, for he is not seeking anything nor does he have any doubts. He is like the person who says to the doctor: "I am sick," but does not tell him what his sickness is. He cannot be cured until his sickness is diagnosed. It is right

²¹¹ "looking for leniency, interpretation, and tricks": trying to look for ways to escape the duties imposed by the Religious Law through tortured interpretations of the letter that distort the spirit of the law. Regrettably, even the Law of God is not immune from the attacks of unscrupulous interpreters and legal chicanery.

to say to him: "Be astonished by anything thou wishest, but doubt not that thou wert created, that thy Creator is Powerful, and that He can do anything He desires in the universe." Then this concept should be made known to him by proofs, as has been explained above.

THE THIRD TOPIC: THE KNOWLEDGE OF THIS WORLD

1. THE REASON FOR MAN'S BEING IN THE WORLD

Know that the world is a stage of the stages on the way of religion, a passing place for travelers to the Divine Presence, a decked-out market placed at the edge of the desert from which the travelers take provisions.

The world and the Hereafter comprise two states: that which is prior to death and nearer to thee and which is called the world; and that which is after death, called the Hereafter. The purpose of the world is the provisioning for the Hereafter. A human being is created plain and deficient at the beginning of his creation, but has the potential to achieve perfection and to make the celestial image the design of his soul in order to be fitting for the Divine Presence, in the sense that he finds a way to become one of the beholders of the beauty of the Presence. This is the farthest limit of his (spiritual) happiness. This is his Paradise. This is why he was created!

However, he cannot become a beholder so long as his eyes are not opened, nor can he perceive that Beauty. That comes with spiritual knowledge. The key to the knowledge of the Divine Beauty is knowledge of the wonders of the divine handiwork. And the (five) human sensory organs are the first key to the divine handiwork. These senses would not have been possible except in this body compounded of water and dust.

So, this is the reason he has fallen into the world of water and dust, so that he may gather his provisions and obtain the spiritual knowledge of God Most High with the key of the knowledge of his own self and the knowledge of all quarters of the world²¹² perceptible to the senses. As long as a person possesses these senses and they spy out things for him, he is said to be "in the world." When he says farewell to these senses, while he endures as do those things that are the essence of his attributes.²¹³ Then, it is said that he has gone to the Hereafter. Consequently, this is the reason for his being in the world.

2. THE TRUE NATURE, BANE, AND PURPOSE OF THE WORLD

So, a person needs two things in the world: one is to obtain nourishment for his soul to protect it from the causes of destruction; and

²¹² *jumlah-yi āfāq*: literally, "all horizons." "Horizons" here can refer to all quarters of heaven and earth; all perceptible things.

²¹³ This passage refers to the death of the body (and the physical senses with it) and the survival of the essential person; that is, his soul and intangible attributes.

the other is to obtain nourishment for his body to protect it from the Destroyers.²¹⁴ The nourishment of the soul is the spiritual knowledge and love of God Most High. The nourishment of every thing is according to its nature, for that is its natural disposition. It has previously been made clear that this is the natural disposition of a human being. The reason for the destruction of a human being is his becoming absorbed in something other than God Most High.

The body must be tended by the soul, for the body is mortal while the soul is immortal. The body for the soul is like the camel for the pilgrim on the road to perform the Pilgrimage; the camel is for the pilgrim, not the pilgrim for the camel, even though the pilgrim is necessarily obligated to provide it with fodder, water, and covering until he reaches the Ka'bah and is relieved of this trouble. However, his obligation must be according to need. If he spends all of this time in feeding, adorning, and tending (the camel), the caravan will leave him behind and he will perish. In the same manner, if a person spends all of his time tending his body so that he will increase his strength and keep dangerous things away, he will be deprived of his own (spiritual) happiness.

The body needs three things in the world: food, clothing, and shelter. Food is for nourishment; clothing and shelter are for cold and heat, to prevent them from killing him. A person's needs for his body are no more than these; indeed, these are the foundations of the world itself.

The nourishment of the soul is spiritual knowledge, the more the better, while the nourishment of the body is food. Shouldst thou eat too much of it, it may cause thy demise. However, it is for this that God Most High has appointed a sensual appetite over a human being to prompt him with respect to food, clothing, and shelter, lest his body—his steed—perish. This appetite is created in such a way so that it does not limit itself, but (continually) desires more. The intellect has been created to restrain it, and the Religious Law has been sent by means of the tongues of the prophets to elucidate it.

However, the carnal appetite was created first, for an infant has need of it. The intellect was created after it. Thus, appetite took its place from the beginning and became established firmly. It continuously resists the intellect and the Law, which came after it so as not to permit his totality to engage in the quest for food, clothing, and shelter and thereby forget his self and not know for what this food and clothing are needed and why he came into this world and (so as not to) forget the nourishment of the soul, which is the provision for the Hereafter. From all this, thou knowest the true nature, bane, and purpose of the world. Now, thou shouldst learn the branches and activities of the world.

²¹⁴ "the Destroyers" (*muhlikāt*): See the Third Pillar.

3. THE BASES OF THE WORLD: FOOD, CLOTHING, AND SHELTER

Know that when thou examinest the details of the world, thou wilt find that it is comprised of three things: (1) first, the most noble of things that have been created upon the face of the earth, such as plants, metals, and animals. In reality, (2) land is necessary for dwellings and for the use of agriculture. Metals, such as copper, bronze, and iron, (are necessary) for tools; and (3) animals for transportation and food. A human being has busied his soul and body with these things, be it the soul busying itself with its love them and their acquisition, or the body with their improvement and taking care of them.²¹⁵

Traits that cause its ruin, such as greed, miserliness, envy, enmity, etc., will appear in the soul as a result of its being engaged with the love for these things. And these traits in the soul arise from the entanglement of the body with (the world) to the extent that one forgets one's self, devoting all to worldly affairs.

Just as the bases of the world are three things—food, clothing, and shelter—the bases of the arts, which are a human necessity—are also three things: farming, weaving, and construction. Each one of these has branches. Some are preparatory, such as the cotton carder and the spinner who prepares (the thread) for the weaver; while others finish the work, such as the tailor who finishes what the weaver has begun. All of these require implements made of wood, iron, leather, and the like; thus, the blacksmith, carpenter, and the cobbler come into existence.

When all of these have appeared, they need to help each other, for each person cannot do all of these jobs by himself. Therefore, they come together. The tailor does work for the weaver and the blacksmith; the blacksmith takes care of the needs of the other two. In this fashion, each one works for the others.

Eventually, transactions appear among them from which antagonisms arise, for each person may not be satisfied with his own portion, and they may attack each other. As a result, they find themselves in the need for three more arts: one, the art of politics and rule; two, the art of adjudication and government; and three, the art of religious jurisprudence²¹⁶ by which the law of mediation among the people may be known. Each one of these is a trade, although most of their work is not related to the hands.

²¹⁵ AA points out in a note that while Ghazzali mentions the first of the three things that are the basis of the world, he apparently does not mention the second and third. By careful scrutiny of the corresponding passage of *The Revival*, AA concludes that the second and third points are engagement of the soul and body respectively with the world.

²¹⁶ "religious jurisprudence" (*fiqh*): knowledge, especially of religion and jurisprudence; theology. It comes from the Arabic root *f-q-h* meaning "to understand, comprehend, have legal knowledge." The (religious) jurist is a *faqīh* (pl. *fuqahā*).

In this manner, the vocations of the world have multiplied and become interrelated. The people have lost themselves among them and do not know that the root of all of these was no more than three things: food, clothing, and shelter. All of this became necessary for (satisfying) those three needs, and those three are necessary for the body, and the body is necessary for the soul, to serve as its vehicle. The soul is necessary for God. But they forget themselves and they forget God, like the pilgrim who forgets himself, the Ka'bah, and (the object of) his journey and spends all of his time in taking care of his camel!

Therefore, the world and the real nature of the world is what has been said above. He who is not prepared and alert, does not have his eye fixed on the Hereafter, and is not occupied with the world more than necessary, has not come to know the world. The cause of this is ignorance, as the Prophet (S) said: "The world is more of a sorcerer than were Harut and Marut;²¹⁷ beware of it!"

Since the world is so bewitching, it behooves us to know its treachery and deceit, and to enlighten the people with examples of its works. Accordingly, it is now the time for thee to hear some of these examples.

4. EXAMPLES OF THE SORCERY OF THE WORLD AND THE HEEDLESSNESS OF ITS INHABITANTS

THE FIRST EXAMPLE: The first sorcery of the world is that it shows itself to thee so that thou suppose that the world is itself unmoving) and is settled down firmly with thee, yet it is continuously fleeing from thee! However, it moves gradually, and bit by bit. It is like a shadow: when thou lookest at it, it appears still; but it is always moving. It is obvious that thy life is doing the same, always passing. Gradually, moment by moment, it is growing less. That is the world that is fleeing from thee and bidding thee farewell; but thou art unaware!

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: Its spell is that it feigns friendship in order to make of thee its lover. Moreover, it pretends to thee to have come to a living arrangement with thee and will not go to another. Then, suddenly, it becomes thine enemy! It is like a depraved, worthless woman who tricks men into becoming her lovers. Then she takes them home and kills

²¹⁷ Hārūt and Mārūt: Two angels mentioned in the Quran (2:102), who displayed compassion for the predicament of mankind. They were given the capacity to feel as humans do and were sent to earth to be tempted. They sinned and were offered punishment in this world or the Hereafter. They chose the punishment of this world. Islamic tradition supplies stories of their coming to earth in human form and being undone by its temptations.

them. Jesus²¹⁸ (A), in his own revelations, saw the world in the shape of an old woman. He asked her: "How many husbands hast thou had?" She replied: "Too many to count." He said: "Did they die or divorce thee?" She said: "Neither; I slew them all." Jesus said: "How strange it is that those other fools who saw what thou hadst done to the others, nevertheless desired thee and did not learn the lesson."

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: The sorcery of the world is that its exterior is adorned attractively while everything of its calamities and sufferings is concealed, so that the ignorant will look at the appearance and be deluded. Its similitude is the veiled, ugly old crone who dresses in garments of silk brocade and wears many beautiful ornaments so that anyone who sees her from a distance will be attracted to her. But when he lifts the veil, he is filled with regret and sees her infamies.

In the Traditions it is related that the world will be summoned on the Day of Resurrection in the form of an ugly, toothless, green-eyed old hag so that the people may look at her and say: "*We seek refuge with God!* What is this, with this disgrace and with this ugliness?" They will reply: "This is the world for which ye envied and fought each other, shed blood, and betrayed the bonds of kinship. This is what attracted you!" At the moment she is thrown into hell, she will cry: "O Lord God! Where are my lovers?" He will command that they be thrown into hell after her.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: A person who takes into account how long was the part of eternity when he did not exist in the world, and how long he will be in eternity when he is not in the world, and how few these days are between pre-eternity and unending eternity,²¹⁹ he knows that the metaphor of the world is the road of a traveler. At the beginning it is a cradle and at the end a grave. In between there are a limited number of stations. While he is traveling, every year is like a station, every month a parasang,²²⁰ and every day a mile,²²¹ and every breath a step. For one (person) a parasang of the journey is left, for another less than a parasang, for others more or less. And that person, who sits calmly, as it

²¹⁸ In Islamic belief, the crucifixion of Jesus was an illusion or a deception. Jesus himself escaped and became the model of the Sufi world-traveler. There exists a much-venerated tomb in Kashmir described as his final resting place. Many of the unfamiliar sayings and stories about him attributed to him in Islamic literature come from the considerable body of non-canonical gospels and miracle-books that circulated in the early Christian centuries before being rejected and partly suppressed by developing Christian orthodoxy. Others probably developed locally where Jesus is presumed to have passed.

²¹⁹ See Note 266.

²²⁰ *parasang*: a distance of about six kilometers or three and a half miles, something like the "league" of three miles. It was the average distance a caravan or an army was supposed to be able to travel in an hour under ordinary conditions.

²²¹ Ghazzali uses the word *mīl*, which is a third of a parasang.

were, as though he would always be here, makes arrangements for ten years in the future that he will not need—in two days, he will be under the earth!

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: Know that the similitude of the inhabitants of the world in the enjoyment of what they obtain compared with that disgrace and sorrow they will see from the world in the Hereafter is the person who gorges himself on delicious, fat, and sweet food until he ruins his stomach. Then, he perceives a stench and vileness in his bowels, his breath, and his stools. Then, he is put to shame and regrets that the pleasure is gone but the unpleasantness remains: the more delicious the food, the more fetid the stools. However much the pleasure of the world is greater, the greater will be the disgrace in the end. This itself will become evident when the soul is torn (from the body). Whoever enjoyed more the ease, orchards, gardens, serving girls and boys, gold, and silver, will, at the time of death, have more sorrow, tribulation, and torment than that person who possessed less. That sorrow and torment will not disappear at death; rather it will increase, for that love (of the world) is (become) an attribute of the soul, and the soul will endure and not die.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: Know that the affairs of the world which come before us seem trivial. People think that their work will not take long, but perhaps a minor thing will bring about a hundred things. Jesus, on whom be peace, says: "The seeker of the world is like one who drinks water from the sea. The more he drinks the thirstier he becomes. He drinks until he perishes, and the thirst never passes from him." Our Prophet (S) says: "Just as it is not possible for a person to enter the water without getting wet, it is not possible for a person to engage in the affairs of the world without getting tainted."

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: The similitude of the person who comes into the world is that of the person who becomes the guest of a host whose custom it is to always keep his hall prepared for guests. He invites them, group after group. He places a golden platter before him. On it are sugarplums and a silver censer with fragrant aloeswood and incense to perfume him and make him pleasant-smelling. He eats the sugarplums and passes the tray and censer to others. Each who knows the etiquette and is intelligent in turn sniffs the aloeswood and incense, and perfumes himself and eats of the sugarplums and passes the tray and censer to the next in good spirits. (Then) he expresses his gratitude and departs. But the person who is a fool thinks that they were given to him and takes them with him. When they are taken back from him at the time of departure, he is unhappy and displeased, and he protests!

The world, too, is like an inn, a stopping place for travelers so that they may gather the provisions for the rest of the journey. They should not covet anything in the inn.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: The inhabitants of the world with their attachment to the affairs of the world and their forgetting the Hereafter are like some people on a ship who come to an island. They go ashore to take care of their physical needs and for purification. The captain calls out to them: "Do not delay; just purify yourselves. The ship will depart shortly."

The people spread out over the island. The more intelligent purify themselves quickly and return. They find the ship empty, so they occupy the pleasanter and more favorable places. Another group lose themselves in the marvels of the island and stand admiring the fine flowers, songbirds, and colorful, patterned pebbles. When they return, they find no open places and sit crowded together in the dark, and they suffer from that.

Another group does not content themselves with merely looking. They collect some of the fine, strange, colorful stones and bring them back to the ship with them. They find no places to sit comfortably, so sit pressed together. They hang the colorful stones and buttercups around their necks. After one or two days, those beautiful colors change and become dark. The odor of the flowers begins to become unpleasant. They cannot find any place to throw them down. They regret what they have done and bear their sorrow for it on their necks.

Another group falls under the spell of the island and goes off like tourists until they are so far from the ship that they do not hear the captain's summons. They are left on the island until some of them perish from hunger, and the others are killed by wild beasts.

The first group are like the abstemious believers, and the last are like the unbelievers who have forgotten God, self, and the Hereafter. All of those others have given themselves to the world: *They have chosen the life of the world over the Hereafter.* (Q. 16:107) The two groups in between are like rebels who have preserve the basis of faith, but have not abstained from the world: one group took pleasure in poverty, and the other group accumulated many comforts with pleasure, until they became a heavy burden.

5. NOT EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD IS BLAMEWORTHY

With this previous censure of the world, think thou not that everything in the world is forbidden; rather, there are things in the world that are not of the world. In what way? Knowledge and deeds are in the world, but not of it, for they accompany a person to the Hereafter. Knowledge itself will endure with him exactly (as it is); however, as for

one's deeds, though they will not endure precisely as they were, their effect will remain. This is divided into two parts: one is the cleanliness and purity of the essence of the soul, which are attained by means of abandoning sin: and the other is the fondness for the remembrance of God Most High that is attained by scrupulousness in worship. So, these two are among the good deeds that endure, as God Most High said: *And the enduring good deeds are better in thy Lord's sight for reward.* (Q. 19:76)

The pleasure of knowledge, the pleasure of secret conversation,²²² and the pleasure of the fondness for remembering God Most High are better than all other pleasures. They are in the world, but not of it. Consequently, all pleasures are not blameworthy, just the pleasure which passes or does not endure. These too are not all censured, for there are two kinds: one is that which, although of the world and perishing after death, such as food, conjugal intercourse, clothing, and shelter in measure according to need, yet is a helper for the work of the Hereafter, for knowledge and deeds, and for the increase of (the number of) believers, as this is a condition of the road to the Hereafter. Every person who is satisfied with this much of the world and whose aim from it is rendering aid to religious work is not worldly.

Therefore, (those things) of the world are reprehensible the purpose of which is not to further the work of religion; indeed, they are the cause of heedlessness, hubris, the establishment of the soul in this world, and the abhorrence of the next world. It was for this that the Prophet (S) said: "The world and all that is in it is accursed save the remembrance of God Most High, and that which supports him in that."

Let this much suffice in explanation of the true nature and purpose of the world. We shall speak about the rest in the Third Pillar about the Principles of Conduct which is called *Obstacles on the Path of Religion*.²²³

²²² "secret conversation (with God)": *munājāt*.

²²³ See Chapter Two of the Third Pillar.

THE FOURTH TOPIC: THE SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE HEREAFTER

1. PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL HEAVEN AND HELL

Know that no one recognizes the true nature of the Hereafter until he first recognizes the true nature of death. He does not know the true nature of death until he knows the true nature of life. He does not recognize the true nature of life until he recognizes the true nature of the soul (*rūh*); and the spiritual knowledge of the true nature of the soul is the spiritual knowledge of the true nature of his own self (*nafs*), about which something has already been explained.

Know from what has been said before, a person is compounded of two basic things: one, the soul; the other, the physical body. The soul is like the rider and the body like the steed. By means of the body, this soul has a state in the Hereafter that is (either) destined for Paradise or destined for hell. By reason of its own essence, it also has a state in which the body does not participate, and it is destined for (either) spiritual happiness or misery. We name that ease and pleasure of the soul which is unconnected to the body "Spiritual Paradise," and we call the sorrow, pain, and misery of the soul which is unconnected to the body "Spiritual Fire."

As for the heaven and hell when the body is present, that itself is obvious. The harvest of the former is rivers, trees, the pure ones,²²⁴ food, drink, etc.; while the harvest of hell is fire, reptiles, scorpions, the tree of Zaqqūm,²²⁵ etc. The descriptions in the Quran and Traditions of both of these are well-known and are comprehensible by all, while the particulars have been discussed in the book *The Remembrance of Death* in *The Revival*.²²⁶ We shall confine ourselves here to an exposition about

²²⁴ "pure ones" (*hūr*): They are describe in Q. 55:56-78 as pure damsels of great beauty whom no man or jinn has touched. The word *hur*, the plural of *hawrā*, (the source of the English "hourī" and attendant fantasies) refers to the brightness of their eyes, the whites being extremely white and contrasting sharply with the darkness of the pupil and the iris. The Arabic verb *hawwara* means "to bleach."

²²⁵ The tree of Zaqqūm is mentioned and described several places in the Quran. For example:

"Is this better entertainment or the tree of Zaqqum? Surely, We have made it a trial for the wrongdoers. It is a tree that grows in the bottom of hell. Its produce is, as it were, the heads of serpents. Then truly they will eat of it and fill (their) bellies with it." (Q. 37:62-66)

It has been identified by later scholars with several thorny and pungent trees, but these identifications may have been inspired by the Quranic verses. The Arabic root of the word *Zaqqūm* (*z-q-m*) refers to "swallowing, gulping, gobbling (food)."

²²⁶ A reference, of course, to Ghazzali's own *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*.

the true nature of death and refer to the meaning of spiritual heaven and hell, something that not every one knows.

That which He said—*I have prepared for My righteous worshippers that which the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, and which has not occurred to the heart of man*—is about spiritual heaven.²²⁷ From within the soul, there is an opening to the spiritual world through which these sublime realities are revealed. No doubt shall remain about this. The clear certainty of the happiness and the punishment of the Hereafter is made manifest to the person for whom this way is opened, not by way hearsay; rather, by way of perception and witnessing. Indeed, just as a physician recognizes whether the body is well or miserable in this world—that which is called good health or illness, for which there are reasons such as restraint and abstention (for the former) and over-eating and self-indulgence (for the latter)—in the same manner, it becomes plain with this witnessing that there is a happiness and a distress for the soul (*dil*); that is, the spirit (*rūh*). Worship and spiritual knowledge nourish that happiness, while ignorance and sin is poisonous to it. That is an extremely rare knowledge.

Most of those who are called religious scholars neglect this. Indeed, they deny it! They do not go beyond the heaven and hell of the body. They know nothing about the knowledge of the Hereafter save (what has come down to them of) by report and authority. We have written many long books in Arabic²²⁸ in the explanation and investigation of this proof. In this book, enough is said so that a quick-witted person, whose mind is clear of contamination, fanaticism, and blind authority, will regain it. The affair of the Hereafter will become firm and strong in his soul, but the belief of most people in the Hereafter is weak and unstable.

2. THE TRUE NATURE OF DEATH

If thou wishest to know something about the true nature of death; that is, what its meaning is; know that a person has two spirits. One is of the nature of the spirit of animals, and we call it the “animal spirit.”²²⁹ The other is of the kind of the spirit of the angels and we call that the “human spirit.”²³⁰ The heart (*dil*) is the source of the animal spirit—that lump of flesh placed to the left (in thy chest). It is as tenuous as a vapor from the humors within the animal.²³¹ An even temperament comes from

²²⁷ See Note 176. The quotation in Arabic is a Tradition, not a verse from the Quran.

²²⁸ Another reference to Ghazzali's own *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*.

²²⁹ “animal spirit”: *rūh-i haywānī*.

²³⁰ “human spirit”: *rūh-i insānī*.

²³¹ “the humors” (*akhlāt*): the four humors of the body: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. Section Four below.

that. From the heart, it reaches the brain and all parts of the body by means of the arteries that have pulse and movement. This spirit is the bearer of the powers of sensory perception and motion. When it reaches the brain its heat decreases and it becomes mild. The eye receives its power of sight from it; the ear receives its power of hearing from it, and so on with the other senses.

The similitude (of the animal spirit) is a lamp that moves about a house. Wherever its goes, the walls of the house become illuminated by it. So, as the illumination from the lamp appears on the walls, in the same manner the power of sight, hearing, and the other senses of this spirit in the external organs by the power of God, *may He be praised and exalted*, become manifest. Should an obstruction or blockage occur in any of these arteries, those organs further down remain inactive and paralyzed. There is no longer any power of perception or movement in them. A physician endeavors to open such blockages.

This spirit is like the flame of the lamp. The heart is like the wick. Food is like the oil—should the oil be exhausted, the lamp dies; and if no nourishment is received, the balanced temperament of this spirit deteriorates and the animal dies. In the same way, if there is oil, but the wick draws up too much of it, it is consumed and no longer draws the oil. In this way, after a long period of time, the heart no longer accepts food. And in the same way, if something strikes the lamp, it will go out, even though the oil and wick are in place. So too, if an animal suffers a great injury, it will die.

This spirit, as long as its humors are in balance—a necessary prerequisite—receives delicate images, such as the powers of sensory perception and movement, from the lights of the heavenly angels by the command of God Most High. Should the balance of the humors deteriorate, by an excess of heat, cold, or for some other reason, it will not be fit to receive those impressions: like a mirror, the surface will reflect images so long as its surface is suitable. If it becomes scratched or tarnished, it will not reflect; not because the images have been obliterated or are absent, but because its fitness to reflect them has been nullified.

In this way, the suitability of this fine and even vapor which we have designated the animal spirit is tied to the balance of the humors. If that is nullified, it will not admit of balancing. When it does not accept the powers of perceptions and motion, the limbs are deprived of its effect and fall insensate and motionless. It is said: "It died."

This is the meaning of the death of the animal spirit. The arranger of these causes—to disturb the balance of the humors—is a created being, one of those beings created by God Most High. He is called the Angel of Death. People know his name, but coming to know his true nature is lengthy.

This is the meaning of the death of animals, but the death of a human being is of a different kind, for he has the spirit which the animals

have and another spirit, which we have designated the "human spirit," or "soul" (*dil*) in some of the previous chapters. It is not of the same kind as the other spirit, which is physical, like attenuated air or like a refined, ripened, purified mist.

But this human spirit has no body, for it does not admit of division. The knowledge of God Most High alights in it. As God Most High is Indivisible and One, the place of the spiritual knowledge of the One's is also one and indivisible. It does not alight in any place capable of division; rather it alights in something incomparably one and indivisible.

So, consider the wick and the flame of the lamp and the light of the lamp, all three. The wick is like the heart (*dil*), the flame of the lamp is like the animal spirit, and the light of the lamp is like the human spirit. Just as the light of the lamp is insubstantial and finer than the lamp, and, thou wouldst say, cannot (itself) be observed,²³² the human spirit is also insubstantial—an addition to the animal spirit, and is, thou wouldst say, not observable.

This is an apt comparison when thou takest into consideration its insubstantiality. But from another point of view, it is not apt, for the light of the lamp is dependent upon the lamp and is an offshoot of it. When the lamp is rendered useless, the light perishes. However, the human spirit is not dependent upon the animal spirit; rather, it is the foundation of the animal spirit. When the animal spirit perishes, (the human spirit) does not perish. If thou desirest its similitude, imagine a light that is more delicate than that lamp and (imagine) that the existence of the lamp is dependent upon (the light), not the light upon the lamp. Then the comparison will be apt.

Therefore, in one way the animal spirit is like a vehicle for the human spirit; and in another, a tool. When the constitution of this animal spirit is destroyed, the form perishes, but the human spirit remains in place, however without a tool and a vehicle. The death of the vehicle or the spoiling of the tool does not mean the harm and annihilation of the rider; but he is (left) without implements.

The implement given to him was given so that he might hunt spiritual knowledge and the love of God Most High. If he has taken the prey, the loss of his implements is a blessing, removing a burden from him. This is what the Prophet (S) said: "Death is a gift and a present for the believer." It is as though a person has a net for trapping and always lugs it about. When he has captured his prey, the loss of the net is a windfall for him. If, *God forbid*, this tool is made useless before capturing the prey, his regret and trouble will have no end. This pain and

²³² That is cannot be perceived of itself, but only by its effect, such as visibility of an object resulting from the effect of light.

regret is the beginning of the torment of the grave, *may God save us from that!*

3. THY THOU-NESS IS NOT IN THY BODY²³³

Now, know that if a person's arms and legs are paralyzed, he may survive,²³⁴ for his true nature is not in them. Arms and legs are his tools and he employs them. Just as the true nature of thy "thou-ness" is not in thy arms and legs, so it is not in thy back, stomach, or head; nor anywhere (else) in thy physical body. If all should become paralyzed, it is possible that a person will survive. The meaning of death is that all parts of the body become paralyzed,²³⁵ but the meaning of paralysis of the hand is that it does not act at thy command. Why? Because the obedience (to thee) that it possessed was by way of an attribute called "power." That attribute is a light which comes to it from the lamp of the animal spirit. Should the arteries, which are the pathways of that spirit, become blocked, the power departs (from the hand) and obedience became impossible. In the same manner, the obedience that all parts of the body have to thee is by virtue of the animal spirit. So, when its temperament is destroyed and obedience ceases, it is called "death." But thou survivest, even though thy being obeyed (by the body and its parts) does not survive.

How can the true nature of thy thou-ness be in this body? If thou think about it, thou wilt realize that these parts of thee are not the same parts as those thou didst possess when a child. They have all dissolved and been replaced by others with the food (thou hast consumed). The body is not the same (that thou hadst then), but thou art the same thou! Therefore, thy thou-ness does not lie in thy body. If thy body is destroyed, so be it! Thou continuest to live in thine essential self.

However, thy attributes are of two kinds: one kind is shared with thy body, such as hunger, thirst, and sleep. They cannot be satisfied without stomach and body. They are canceled at the time of death. The other is that in which the body has no part, such as the knowledge of God Most High and beauty of the Divine Presence, and the joy that comes with that. This attribute is of thine essence and endures with thee. This is the meaning of: *Enduring good deeds.* (Q. 18:46: 19:76) Anything other than this is (thy) ignorance of God Most High, which (ignorance) is also an attribute of thine essence. This is a blindness of the soul (*rūh*) and the seed of *whoso will be blind here will be blind in the Hereafter, and yet further from the Path.* (Q. 17:72)

²³³ "Thy thou-ness" (*tūyī-yī tū*) or, more literally: *The thou-ness of thee*: in modern idiom. "Your You-ness"; i.e., your essential individuality.

²³⁴ "survives" (*bar jāyī khwīsh bāshad*): literally, "he is/may be in his place."

²³⁵ i.e., cease to function.

Thou wilt in no manner know the true nature of death until thou come to recognize these two spirits, the difference between them, and their relationship to each other.

4. PRESERVING THE BALANCE OF THE SPIRIT

Know, now, that this animal spirit is of this lower world and is a compound of the tenuousness of the vapor of the humors. There are four humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. These four originate in water, fire, earth, and air.²³⁶ The discord and equilibrium of temperament comes from the differences in degrees of heat, cold, moisture, and dryness. The object of the craft of medicine is to maintain the equilibrium of these four humors in the (animal) spirit to the end that it be fit to function as the vehicle and tool of the other spirit, that which we have called the "human spirit." That (spirit) is not of this world; rather, it is of the higher world and is of the essence of the angels. Its descent into this world is foreign to the nature of its essence; however, its exile (to this world) is to enable it to gather its provisions from guidance, as God Most High said: *We said: Go down, all of you, from hence; but verily there comes unto you from Me a guidance; and whoso follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, neither shall they grieve.* (Q. 2:38) And this which God Most High said: *I am about to create a mortal out of the clay, and when I have fashioned him, and breathed into him of My spirit...* (Q. 38:71-72) is a reference to the difference between the two spirits. He delivered one with the clay and He explained the equilibrium of this temperament when He said: *"I have fashioned him,"* (meaning) "I have made and equipped him"—and this is the equilibrium. Then He said: *"I have breathed into him of My spirit,"* He added this to him. The similitude of this is that of a person preparing a canvas rag so that it will catch fire.²³⁷ Then he takes it near the fire and blows on it until it catches fire.

Just as that lower animal spirit retains its equilibrium, and a physician comes to know the causes of that equilibrium in order to repel illness and to keep it from destruction, so there is an equilibrium for the higher human spirit—that which is the true nature of the soul which ethics and spiritual self-discipline—which are known from the Religious Law—preserve. That is the cause of its health, as will be discussed below in *The Pillars of Being a Muslim*.²³⁸

²³⁶ The four elements.

²³⁷ A person prepares a piece of coarse canvas which does not readily burn by shredding, etc., so that it will accept the fire (it will burn) when he brings it to the fire and blows on it.

²³⁸ *The Pillars of Being a Muslim*: the main body of this work, immediately following the Prolegomena.

Thus, it has been made known that so long as a person does not know the true nature of a person's spirits, it is impossible that he come to know the Hereafter through insight; just as one cannot know God, may He be glorified and exalted, until he knows himself. Therefore, self-knowledge is the key to the knowledge of God and the key to knowledge of the Hereafter. The root of religion is *belief in God and the Last Day*. It is for this reason that we have presented this spiritual knowledge.

However, we have not disclosed one secret of the secrets of His basic qualities, for it is not permitted to utter that. Minds could not endure it. All of the spiritual knowledge of God, *may He be glorified and exalted*, and of the spiritual knowledge of the Hereafter is based upon it. Try to learn it from thyself by way of earnest striving and seeking; for, if thou didst hear it from someone else, thou wouldst not have the strength to listen to it. Many have heard this attribute of God Most High and have not believed, did not have the strength to hear it, or denied it, saying: "This itself is not possible! It is not absolute transcendence;²³⁹ rather, it is the denial of attributes!" So, how wouldst thou have the strength to hear it with respect to a human being?

Indeed, this attribute with respect to God Most High is not itself found explicitly in the Quran, nor in the Traditions; also because if people should hear it, they would deny it. The prophets were advised: "*Have discourse with the people according to the (levels of) their intellects.*" "Speak to the people what they are able to bear."²⁴⁰ It was revealed to some of the prophets: "Do not say to the people that which they do not understand, for then they will deny it and that will cause them harm."

5. THE MEANING OF THE GATHERING, RESURRECTION, SENDING, AND RETURN

From all of this you have learned that the true nature of the human soul (*jān*) is established in its own insubstantial essence, and within the establishment of its own essence and special attributes, it has no need of physical form. Death does not mean the annihilation of that; rather, it means the end of its dominion over the physical body. The meaning of the Gathering, the Resurrection, the Sending, and the Return²⁴¹ is not that the soul is brought into existence again after annihilation. Rather, it means that it is given a form, that is, a form which

²³⁹ "absolute transcendence" (*tanziḥ*): total purity and freedom from all anthropomorphic attributes and elements in the concept of deity.

²⁴⁰ Ghazzali gives a slightly different implication to his Persian translation of the Arabic sentence.

²⁴¹ These terms—gathering, resurrection, sending, and return—all refer to the same thing, the resurrection on the Day of Judgment.

is prepared to receive its occupation again, just as was done in the beginning. This time it is easier, because at the first time, both the soul and the body had to be created. This time the spirit (*rūḥ*) endures—that is, the human spirit—and parts of the body also endure. Their collection is easier than their invention, from our point of view and from the point of view of truth. Human qualities have no access to the Divine Intelligence, for where there is no difficulty; there is also no ease.

The prerequisite of the Return is not that (the soul) be given to the body which it (formerly) occupied, which was in the form of a vehicle. If the horse is changed, the rider is still the same. It has been subject to change from infancy to old age, its parts for other parts of nourishment, while he remains the same.

Therefore, the people who have stipulated this²⁴² until problems have arisen for them to which they have given weak answers have been delivered from that difficulty, as when they have been asked: "Some people eat people; the limbs of one become the limbs of the other. To which one will the parts be given? Or, if a limb (or an organ) is lost to a person and after that he performs acts of service thereby acquiring religious merit, is the severed limb returned to him (in the afterlife) or not? If it is not, how can he remain sightless, handless, or footless in heaven? How can those organs which did not participate in his deeds in this world be rewarded?"

They say idle things like this and demand answers. There is no need of such things when thou hast learned the true nature of the Return, which is that there is no need for the same (earthly) body. This difficulty arises because they supposed that thy thou-ness and thy true nature are thy body. As that very same body does not survive, thou are not that (body)! They fall into difficulty because the premise is wrong.

6. WITNESSING HEAVEN AND HELL IN THIS WORLD

Certainly thou mayest say that amongst the religious scholars and theologians there is the famous doctrine that the vital principle (*jān*) is obliterated at death, then comes into existence again for him, and this contradicts that (which thou hast said).

Know that anyone who follows the words of others is blind. This person says that he is neither of the imitators (of authority),²⁴³ nor of the

²⁴² That the same physical body we inhabit upon earth accompanies us to the Hereafter.

²⁴³ "imitators (of authority)" (*ahl-i taqlid*): It should be pointed out that in modern English the words "imitate," "imitation," and "imitator" commonly carry the generally negative connotation of someone or something "spurious, counterfeit, not original, lacking in originality, inferior to the model." Today the words are used more commonly in this sense. However, the real meaning of the verb is to follow something as a pattern or example. Iranian Shi'ites, for example, customarily select some pious and learned (in

discerning, for if he were of the discerning, he would know that the death of the body does eliminate a person's true nature; and if he were of the imitators, he know from the Quran and the Traditions that the human spirit survives after death, and that after death, the spirits are in two categories: the wretched and the happy.

As for the happy spirits, the Glorious Quran says: *And think not of those who are killed in the way of God as dead. Nay, they are alive being provided sustenance from their Lord, rejoicing in what God has given them out of His grace.* (Q. 3:169-70)²⁴⁴

And as for the wretched spirits, when the Prophet (S) and the Companions killed the unbelievers at (the battle of) Badr,²⁴⁵ he addressed them and called to them one by one—and they were slain—saying: “O So-and-so! and O So-and-so! The promises that I had received from God concerning the victory over His enemies were all true and God Most High has fulfilled them. Were the promises that He gave you about the punishment after death kept or not?” The crowd who were accompanying the Prophet said: “O Prophet of God, they are a heap of corpses. Why art thou speaking to them?” He answered: “By that God who commands the spirit of Muhammad, they are hearing these words better than ye are, but they are incapable of replying.”

Anyone who searches through the Traditions that are about the dead and their awareness of their mourners and visitors (at their graves), and that which takes place in this world, knows with certainty that their annihilation is not mentioned in divine law; rather, it is reported that their mode and place have been transformed. The grave is either a cave of the caves of hell, or a garden of the gardens of Paradise.

So, recognize truly that death never nullifies anything of thine essential nature, nor of thy characteristic attributes. However, thy sensory organs, movements, and fancies—those which are tied to the brain and organs—cease, but thou endurest, alone and absolute, just as thou didst left this place. With the death of the horse, the rider does not become a learned jurisprudent if he was a weaver; if he was blind, he does not become sighted, or if he was sighted, he does not become blind: instead,

religious law and ethics) individual—given various titles including *mujtahid* and *āyatullāh*—to follow and consult in matters of religious law and ethics. They say that they are “imitating” or “following” (*taqlid kardan*) him; that is, following his example and instruction. It should not be forgotten that one of the most famous works of Medieval Christianity, by Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471CE) was named *The Imitation of Christ*. In this sense, “imitation” is neutral and can be either good or bad depending on the moral qualities of both the imitator and the imitatee.

²⁴⁴ After quoting these verses in Arabic, Ghazzali follows with a Persian translation, omitted here.

²⁴⁵ The battle of Badr, between the party of the Prophet (about 70 strong) and nearly a thousand of the Quraysh of Makkah, occurred in Ramadan AH2/624CE. It was the first major military victory of the nascent Islamic state.

he becomes a pedestrian! The body is a vehicle, like the horse. The rider is thou!

It is for this reason that for persons who become absent from their sensory perceptions, and delve into their selves, becoming engaged and immersed in the remembrance of God Most High. As it is the beginning of the way of Sufism, there are the states of the Hereafter by way of the blissful experience of witnessing. Their animal spirit, even though it has not lost the equilibrium of its temperament, yet appears to be afflicted or exhausted so that it does not distract them from the true nature of their essence. Then their state approaches that of the state of the dead. Therefore, that which for others is disclosed at death is disclosed to them here. When they come to themselves and return to the world of perceptions, mostly it happens that there is no memory of it. However, there is an effect that stays with one. If the true nature of heaven has been shown to one, its spirit, ease, joy, and delight remain with one.

But if they have shown him hell, then its fatigue and lassitude are with him. If he retains something of that (experience) in his memory, he relates it. If the storehouse of the thought has made a copy of that thing—a similitude that would better remain in his memory—then he relates that, as when the Prophet (S), while performing a obligatory prayer, raised his hand and announced: “A bunch of grapes from heaven has been shown to me. I wished that I could have brought them to this world.” Do not suppose that in reality that a bunch of simulated grapes can be brought into this world. That is impossible; if it were not, (the Prophet) would have brought them. Yet, it was disclosed to him by way of witnessing. The true nature of its transformation is a lengthy study; there is no need for thee to pursue it.

The difference in the stations of the religious scholars is that one is all taken up to know what the bunch of heavenly grapes was, why he saw it, and the others did not! Another got no more than this, that (the Prophet) had moved his hand; therefore *a minor action does not nullify formal prayer* and he gives long opinions about the details of this.²⁴⁶ He thinks the beginning and end of knowledge itself is in these things, and that anyone who has learned this and is not content with that and busies himself with some other (aspect) is himself idle and is turning away from the study of Religious Law!

The point is that thou not thinkest that the Prophet (S) related a story that he had heard from Gabriel, as thou dost comprehend the meaning of “hearing” from Gabriel (thou hast learned that meaning itself like other things, too), but that the Prophet (S) saw heaven! Yet, in reality, heaven cannot be seen in this world. Instead, he went to that

²⁴⁶ This scholar takes the position that, because the Prophet moved his hands during the formal prayer, the significance of that act is that such extraneous motions do not invalidate the prayer. He completely ignores the celestial grapes and their import.

world and was absent from this world. This was one kind of his ascensions. However, being absent is of two kinds: one is with the death of the animal spirit, the other with exhaustion of the animal spirit.

However, heaven cannot be seen in this world, just as the seven heavens and the seven climes cannot be contained in a pistachio shell. One particle of heaven could not be contained in this world. Rather, as the sense of hearing is excluded from displaying the image of the heavens and earth in it as the eyes do, all of the senses of this world are excluded from all the pleasures of heaven. The senses of that world are themselves something else.

7. THE MEANING OF THE TORMENT OF THE GRAVE

Now the time has come for thee to learn the meaning of the torment of the grave and to know that the torment of the grave is of two kinds: spiritual and physical.

As for the physical, everyone knows this himself; but not the spiritual, except for him who has come to know himself and the true nature) of his own spirit (*rūh*). It is established by its own essence, and does not require a body for its support. It endures after death, for death does not obliterate it. However, death takes back his eyes, ears, and all of his sensory organs, from him. When the senses are gone; wife, offspring, wealth, property, domicile, slaves, livestock, relatives, connections, and, indeed, the earth and all that is in it perceptible to the senses are taken from him. If he loved all of these things and he had surrendered his entire self to them, he would necessarily remain in the torment of his separation from them. If he was free of everything and had no beloved here (on earth), but instead was yearning for death, he will be at peace. If he had attained the love of God Most High, had become fond of remembering Him, had given all of himself to Him, and had held the chattels of this world to be irksome and a distraction, then when he dies he will reach his Beloved. Trouble and confusion will depart and he will achieve (spiritual) happiness.

Now, reflect! Is it possible for a person to know himself and recognize that he will survive (after death), and to know that all of his desideratum and cherished things are in this world, and then to wonder whether, after leaving this world, he would be in misery and torment because of his separation from his own cherished possessions? As the Prophet (S) said: *Cherish (well) what thou cherishest, for thou shalt surely be separated from it.* Or, if he knows that his beloved is all God. *may He be praised and exalted*, and holds the world and all that it contains in contempt, except that much which is his provision, can there remain a doubt that when he leaves this world he will not be liberated from sorrow and achieve ease?

Therefore, whoever knows this will have no doubt but that the torment of the grave exists, but not for the pious. Rather, it is for the worldly and those who have dedicated their entire being to the world. Through this, the significance of this Tradition is made clear: *The world is the prison of the believer and the paradise of the unbeliever.*

8. THE TRUE NATURE AND DEGREES OF THE TORMENT OF THE GRAVE

In so far as thou hast come to know the root of the torment of the grave, the cause of which is the love of this world, know that this torment is of different kinds. For some it is more and for others less, in accordance with (their surrender to) the carnal appetites of the world. As a result, the torment for the person who has not bound his soul (*dil*) to more than one thing in all the world is not so great as the torment of that person who has lands, chattels, servants, livestock, apparel, retinue, and all the comforts of the world, and binds his soul to all of them. Indeed, in this world, if someone brings a person the news that one of his horses has been stolen, his torment is less than if he is told that ten of his horses have been stolen. If thou takest all of his property, his sorrow would be greater than if it had been half, and less than it would have been if not only all of his property, but also his wife and children and all that he had in this world—everything—had been carried off as loot and taken out of the land leaving him alone. And this is the meaning of death!

Consequently, the punishment and ease of a person is according to the slackness or tightness of his ties to the world. The torment will be very harsh for him who is favored in every way with the things of the world and who dedicates his entire being to them, as God Most High said: *That is because they love this world's life more than the Hereafter.* (Q. 16:107) Alluding to such as he, the Prophet (S) said: "Do ye know what was the import of the sending down of this verse: *Verily for him there is a straitened life and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection*"? (Q. 20:124) They said: "God and the Prophet know better." He said: "The torment of the unbeliever in the grave is that he will be put in the power by ninety-nine dragons."²⁴⁷ Dost thou know what these dragons are? Ninety-nine snakes, each snake having nine heads.

²⁴⁷ "dragons": The belief in dragons was widespread in the Ancient and Medieval worlds and survives to this day in some corners of the world. The multi-headed dragon of this Tradition is reminiscent of the Hydra, the many-headed serpent or monster of Classical mythology that was slain by Hercules as the second of the Twelve Labors. In this passage Ghazzali seems to be equating "dragon" (*azhdahā*) with "snake" (*mār*). Some sort of reptile is indicated. Incidentally, the English word "dragon" is derived from the Greek *drakon*, meaning "serpent." There is an extensive literature on dragons, which the interested reader may wish to consult. The Arabic for "dragon," *tinnīn*, primarily presents the image of a sea monster.

They bite and lick him and breathe into him until that day when he will be summoned forth."

The insightful have seen these dragons with the eye of insight, but the unseeing fools say: "We looked into the grave and didn't see anything. If there were something—and our eyes are good—we would have seen something."

This fool should know that these dragons are of the essence of the spirit (*rūḥ*) of the dead person and are not external to the inside of his life-spirit (*jān*) so that another could see them! Indeed, this dragon was inside him before death, but he ignored it and did not know it. He should know that this dragon is made up of the attributes of his self (*nafs*), and the number of its heads which branch out from it is according to the number of the branches of his blameworthy traits of character. The root of the nature of this dragon is the love of the world; then the heads which branch out from it are in the number of bad traits of character which branch out from it, such as hatred, envy, hypocrisy, arrogance, greed, deceit, fraud, enmity, the love of rank, pomp, and wealth, etc. The root of this dragon and the multitude of its heads may be recognized with the light of insight; however, their number can be seen by the light of prophethood in accordance with the number of the bad qualities that (the light) encompasses, but we have no knowledge of the number of traits

Thus, this dragon is resident and hidden inside the vital principle (*jān*) of the unbeliever, not only because he is ignorant of God and the Prophet, but also because he has dedicated himself to the world. As God Most High said: *That is because they love this world's life more than the Hereafter.* (Q. 16:107) He also said: *Ye squandered your good things in your life of the world and sought comfort in them.* (Q. 46:20) If it were that the dragon was external to him, as some people suppose, it would have been easier; for it is possible that (the dragon) might refrain from (tormenting him) for an hour. However, it is established within his spirit (*jān*), that it itself is his very attributes, how can he flee from it?

Just as a person who sells a bondmaid then finds that he is in love with her, that dragon within his soul (*jān*) continually stings him. It is his love that was hidden in his soul, but he was unaware of it until now, when it inflicts a wound on him. Just like this one, there were ninety-nine dragons inside him before death, but he was unaware of them until now when the wound has appeared. Just as the love itself was the cause of his ease as long as he was with his beloved; that same (love) became the cause of his sorrow at the time of separation. For, if there had been no love, at the time of separation there would have been no sorrow, as the love of the world and his passionate love that is the cause of ease become the causes of his torment. The love of rank stings his soul like a dragon, the passionate love for wealth (bites) like a snake, the passionate love for rank (stings) like a scorpion, and know that the rest are analogous to these.

As the lover of the bondmaid, in separation, desires to throw himself into water or fire, or that a scorpion sting him so that he is relieved of the pain (of separation), so (the lover of the world) will desire that the pain of the scorpion and snake were in lieu of that which torments him in the grave. For in this world, people know that the former wounds the body and does so from the outside, while the latter wounds inside the soul (*jān*) and does so from within; but no external eye sees it.

So, in reality, each person carries the cause of his own torment with him from here, and that is inside him. It was for this that the Prophet (S) said: *Rather these are your deeds being returned to you.* He said: "All of this punishment is nothing more than your own (deeds) placed before you."²⁴⁸ And it is for this that God Most High said: "If ye had sure knowledge, ye yourselves would see hell." *Nay, would that ye knew with a sure knowledge! For ye will behold hell-fire. Aye, ye will behold it with sure vision!* (Q. 102:5-7) And for this He said: *Lo! Hell is all around the disbelievers.* (Q. 9:49) Hell surrounds them and is together with them: He did not say "will be surrounding."

9. THOSE THINGS OF THE NEXT WORLD WHICH CANNOT BE SEEN BY THE EYE OF THIS WORLD

Surely, thou mayest say: "It is apparent from the external sense of the Religious Law that this dragon is seen with eye of the head, but that dragon which is inside the soul is not visible (to the physical eye)."

Know that this dragon is visible, but only to the dead. The people of this world do not see it, for nothing from the other world can be seen by eye of this world. This dragon is a verisimilitude for the dead person, so that he sees it in the way that a dragon is seen in this world—but thou dost not see it. Just as a sleeping person often sees a snake biting him, but the person sitting beside him does not see it. That snake has reality for the sleeper and he is pained by it, but it is non-existent for the conscious person. The torment of the sleeper is not diminished because the wakeful person does not see the snake.

When a sleeper sees a snake bite him in a dream, it is the injury of an enemy who will obtain victory over him and that pain is spiritual and is on the soul, but its similitude—when desired (to be) borrowed from this world—is a snake. It may be that when an enemy triumphs over him, he may say: "I have seen the explanation of (my) dream." And he may say: "Would that the snake had bitten me and that enemy had not done his will with me," because that torment in his soul would be greater than the pain of the snake (bite) which would be for the body.

²⁴⁸ This is Ghazzali's explanatory translation of the preceding Arabic.

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9. THOSE THINGS OF THE NEXT WORLD WHICH CANNOT BE SEEN BY THE EYE OF THIS WORLD

Surely, thou mayest say: "It is apparent from the external sense of the Religious Law that this dragon is seen with eye of the head, but that dragon which is inside the soul is not visible (to the physical eye)."

Know that this dragon is visible, but only to the dead. The people of this world do not see it, for nothing from the other world can be seen by eye of this world. This dragon is a verisimilitude for the dead person, so that he sees it in the way that a dragon is seen in this world—but thou dost not see it. Just as a sleeping person often sees a snake biting him, but the person sitting beside him does not see it. That snake has reality for the sleeper and he is pained by it, but it is non-existent for the conscious person. The torment of the sleeper is not diminished because the wakeful person does not see the snake.

When a sleeper sees a snake bite him in a dream, it is the injury of an enemy who will obtained victory over him and that pain is spiritual and is on the soul, but its similitude—when desired (to be) borrowed from this world—is a snake. It may be that when an enemy triumphs over him, he may say: "I have seen the explanation of (my) dream." And he may say: "Would that the snake had bitten me and that enemy had not done his will with me," because that torment in his soul would be greater than the pain of the snake (bite) which would be for the body.

²⁴⁸ This is Ghazzali's explanatory translation of the preceding Arabic.

So, if thou shouldst say that the snake is non-existent and that which bites the sleeper is but a phantom of the imagination, know that this is a great error. On the contrary, the snake does exist, for it has achieved the meaning of existence and not achieved the meaning of non-existence. Whatever thou perceivest and seest in sleep has existence for thee, even though no one else can see it. And, whatever thou dost not see is unperceived and non-existent for thee, even though all creation sees it! Since the torment and the cause of the torment have been perceived by both the dead person and the sleeper, what does it matter if others do not see it?

Yet, there is this, that the sleeper will soon awake and be liberated from (his torment). Therefore, this (torment) is called "imaginary." However, the dead person remains enveloped in (torment), for death has no end. (The torment) remains with him permanently, as firmly as the sensory perceptions of this world.

It is not found in the Religious Law that those snakes, scorpions, and dragons that are in the grave should be visible to the physical eyes of the common folk as long as they are in the visible world. However, if a person distances himself from this world by sleeping, and the state of this dead person is revealed to him, he sees him among the snakes and scorpions. The prophets and saints also see this while awake, for what others experience in sleep, they experience while awake. The world of perception does not veil their witnessing the affairs of the other world.

So this prolixity leads to this: that some fools look into a grave and do not see anything with their external eyes, so they deny the torment of the grave. This is because they do not know the way to the affairs of that (other) world.

10. FOR WHOM IS THE TORMENT OF THE GRAVE AND FOR WHOM IS IT NOT?

Surely thou wilt say: "If the torment of the grave is because of the connection of the soul to this world, no one is free from that who loves his wife, children, property, and rank. Consequently, everyone will be subjected to the torment of the grave and no one will escape it."

The answer to this is: "That is not the way of it, for there are people who are fed up with the world and for them no pleasure of enjoyment or tranquillity in it remains. They wish for death, and there are many Muslims like that who are poor.²⁴⁹ However, those who are rich and powerful are of two kinds: there is a group who, though they love the things of this world, also love God Most High. So, if the case be that they

²⁴⁹ "poor" (*darwish*): Ghazzali is using the word to mean "poor in worldly possessions." *Darwish* is also used for those who have chosen poverty for the sake of God, such as many of the Sufis. The word "dervish" derives from this Persian word.

love God Most High more (than the world), then there is no torment for them. Their parable is that of a person who has a mansion and a city that he loves, but he loves governing, rule, palace, and garden even more. If a command comes to him from the king appointing him as the governor of another city, he will not regret leaving his own homeland at all, for his love for his mansion, home, and city will appear as nothing to him and disappear so that no sign of it remains because of his love for governing, which overwhelms it.

Therefore, the prophets, saints, and devout Muslims—even though they favor their wives, children, city, and country—when the love of God Most High appears and the pleasure of intimacy with Him appears, everything else becomes unimportant. This pleasure appears with death, so they are safe from (the torment of the grave). But, there are those who love the carnal appetites of the world more (than God) and they shall not escape this torment; a majority is of this (group).

It is for this that God Most High said: *There is not one of you but shall approach it. That is the fixed ordinance of thy Lord. Then We shall rescue those who kept from evil, and leave the evildoers crouching there.* (Q. 19:71-2) These people will suffer torment for a time. Then, as their commitment to the world grows distant, they forget the world and the pleasures of the world and see again the verity of the love of God Most High that has been in their souls. They are like the person who prefers one mansion to another, or one city to another, or one wife to another, but likes the others too. Separation will be painful for a while; then he forgets and becomes accustomed to the other. But his first affection is in his soul and returns even after a long time. However, the person who has absolutely no love for God Most High stays in that torment, for his love is for that which is taken back from him. By what consolation will he achieve liberation from that? This is one of the reasons that the torment of the unbeliever is eternal.

Know that every one claims that he loves God Most High, or loves Him more than he loves the world; this is the practice of the whole world—in words. But there are criteria and standards by which to recognize him (who speaks the truth). This is when his self and his appetite command him to do something, and the Law of God Most High commands something contrary to that. If one sees that his soul is more inclined to the command of God Most High, then he loves Him more; just as a person loves two friends, but loves one more than the other. If a dispute arises between his friends, he will take the side of the one whom he loves more and in this manner reveals which one he prefers. There are no ifs or buts. Uttering it with the tongue has no profit if the utterance is a lie.

It was with respect to this that the Prophet (S) said: “By always repeating *There is no god but God* they are protected from the punishment of God, *may He be honored and glorified*, until they choose

the bargain of the world over the bargain of religion. When they do that, God Most High calls them liars because their uttering of *There is no god but God* was a lie.”

So, from this thou hast learned that with internal witnessing the spiritually insightful see who will be delivered from the torment of the grave. They know that most people will be delivered, but they will be for a time in differing straits, according to the many different degrees of their ties to the world.

11. THE WAY TO TEST SAFETY FROM THE TORMENT OF THE GRAVE

Again, there is a group of fools and presumptuous persons who say: “If this be the torment of the grave, we will be free of it, for we have no connections with the world; its existence or non-existence is nothing to us!” This claim is absurd; for until one tests it, one would not know. If it were thus, it would not have any effect upon his soul should whatever he possesses be stolen by a thief, every concession he has go to another—from among his companions—and all of his students turn away from him and slander him. It would be the same (to him) as though someone else’s property was carried away or someone else’s concession nullified. Then this claim would be just. It would be proper for him to say: “I have this character.” But he is deluded so long as he is not robbed or they have not turned away from him. Therefore, he must separate himself from his wealth and pass up his rents and test himself; then he will have confidence. Many people have thought that they had no attachment to their wives and bondmaids, but when they divorce or sell them, the fire of love that was concealed in their souls reappears and they become mad and miserable.

Consequently, anyone who desires to be delivered from the torment of the grave must not be attached to anything of this world, except by necessity. Just as every person has a need for a place of purification,²⁵⁰ he likes that out of necessity, yet wishes to be rid of it. His eagerness to put food in his stomach must be the same as in eliminating food from it; both are necessary. All other acts are like this.

Therefore, if the soul cannot be devoid of these attachments, one must make a fondness for the remembrance of God Most High dominant in one’s soul by being attentive to worship and the remembrance of God Most High, so that this love masters the love of the world. One seeks proofs and evidence of this from oneself by following of the Religious Law and giving precedence to the command of God Most High over one’s own passion. If the self (*nafs*) obeys one (in these observances), one may be confident that he has escaped the torment of the grave. If this

²⁵⁰ A euphemism for a toilet (*tahārat-jāy*).

not be the case, he will lay his body upon the torment of the grave, unless God Most High's forgiveness touches him and helps him.

12. THE THREE KINDS OF SPIRITUAL HELLFIRE

Now it is the time for us to explain the meaning of "spiritual hell." By "spiritual," we mean that which pertains to the spirit (*rūḥ*) exclusively: the body is excluded. This is *the fire of God, kindled, which leaps over the hearts (of men)*. (Q. 104:6-7) It is the fire that overwhelms the soul, while that fire that attacks the body is called "physical."

So, know that there are three kinds of fire in the spiritual hell: one is the fire of separation from the carnal appetites of the world; the second is the fire of shame, confusion, embarrassment, and disgrace; and the third is the fire of being deprived of the beauty of the Divine Presence and the loss of hope for that. All three of these fires affect the spirit (*jān*) and the soul (*dil*), not the body. It is necessary to explain the causes of these three fires that they have carried with themselves from this place,²⁵¹ and to make this meaning plain by borrowing comparisons from this world.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST FIRE: This is being cut off from the carnal appetites of the world. The cause of this has been discussed (above) in *The Torment of the Grave*: The love of the necessary is the heaven of the soul and the hell of the soul. It is heaven as long as one is with the beloved and hell in the absence of the beloved. So the lover of the world is in heaven in this world: *the world is the heaven of the unbelievers*. But in the Hereafter, he is in hell, because his beloved (the world) has been taken away from him. Consequently, one thing is both the cause of pleasure and also sorrow, but in two different circumstances.

The similitude of this fire in the world is a king who rules and is obeyed throughout the world and continually indulges himself in the enjoyment of beauties of girls and boys and wives, or in the admiration of beautiful gardens and palaces. Then, suddenly an enemy appears and captures him and carries him off in bondage. In his own country, he is made a keeper of dogs! His family, concubines, and male slaves are used before his very eyes! Everything in the treasury that was precious to him is given to his enemies. Think what sorrow this man will experience! The fire of separation from his power, women, children, bondmaids, blessings, and treasury will ignite in his soul and burn continuously. He would rather that they had killed him in some manner so that he could escape so much torment! This is the similitude of one fire. However

²⁵¹ I.e., the world.

much his ease was greater, his power more absolute and felicitous, the hotter the fire will burn.

Therefore, the love of him whose enjoyment in this world was greater and whom the world favored more will be more intractable and the fire of being cut off will burn more brightly in his spirit (*jān*). Yet, it is not possible to find the likeness of the fire (of spiritual hell) in this world, for the sorrow of the soul that is in this world is not completely established in the soul and spirit. The senses and obligations of this world engage the soul, and those activities are like a curtain for the heart so that torment cannot become firmly established in it. The reason for this is that when the eyes and ears are occupied with something (else), a person's sorrow is diminished; but when they cease, it increases. It is for this reason that when a sorrowing person awakens from sleep, the pain of the misfortune on the soul is greater, for the spirit had been purified during sleep. Before perceptions return (upon awakening), whatever reaches him has a greater effect so that if one hears a sweet voice upon awakening, its effect is greater. The reason for this is the purification of the soul from sensory perceptions (during sleep). It is never completely purified in this world, but at death, it becomes stripped and purified of sensory perceptions. At that time its sorrow and ease is stupendous and firmly fixed in his soul. Take care! Do not suppose that that fire will be like the fire of this world; rather, this fire (of this world) has been washed seventy times, then sent to the world.²⁵²

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SECOND FIRE: That is the fire of shame and confusion from disgrace and humiliation. It will be like this: a king selects a base and tightfisted man and makes him his vizier in his kingdom. He gives him licence to enter his women's quarters without their covering themselves before him. He entrusts his treasury to him and has confidence in him in all tasks. Then, when that man attains ease, he rebels and mutinies in his heart and misappropriates from the king's treasury. He betrays the king and corrupts the king's family and women. But outwardly, he shows himself to be trustworthy to the king.

Then, one day while he is engaged in corruption in the women's quarters, he looks and sees the king looking through a small window and watching him. He knows that he has been observed every day and that the king was delaying until the vizier had made his betrayal even greater so that the king could make an example of him in some manner and kill him. In such a predicament, imagine what a fire of embarrassment from this disgrace was burning in the soul and spirit of that man! And, while

²⁵² That is, the fire of this world has been cooled by a factor of seventy in comparison with the fire of hell.

his body was sound, in that condition, he wishes that he could sink into the earth in order to escape the fire of shame, confusion, and infamy.

So, even as thou performest tasks in this world, out of habit, which apparently seem good, yet their spirit and true nature are ugly and disgraceful. When the spirit and true nature of the thing are disclosed to thee at the Resurrection and thy disgrace revealed to all, thou wilt be burned by the fire of abashment. For example, today thou speakest ill of some one; tomorrow at the Resurrection thou wilt see that as though a person is eating the flesh of his brother and thinks he is eating roast chicken! When he looks, it is the flesh of his own brother that he is eating! See how it would be, how disgraced he will be! What fire will touch his heart! For this is the spirit and true nature of backbiting. This spirit of thine is rotten; that will be plainly evident tomorrow (at the Resurrection). It is for this that when a person dreams that he is eating carrion flesh, the interpretation is that he is backbiting.

If thou throwest a stone at a wall today and someone informs thee that the stone has fallen from the wall into the house and put out the eye of one of thy children, when thou enter the house and see that the eye of one of thy dear children has been blinded by that stone, dost thou know what fire will flame up in thy soul and how ashamed thou wilt become then? A person who in this world envies a Muslim will see himself in that shape at the Resurrection, for the true nature of his envy and his soul is that thou aim to harm him with thine enmity, but the harm is coming back to thee and destroying thy religion. Thy acts of devotion that would have been thy delight in that world are transferred to that person so that thou art stripped of (the merit of that) devotion. Devotion will be more useful to thee tomorrow than the eyes of thy children today, which are the cause of thy happiness. But children will not be the cause of thy (spiritual) happiness. Therefore, tomorrow when forms become the followers of the spirits and true natures, everything they see will be seen as befits its spiritual significance. There will be disgrace and abashment there.

For the reason that sleep is closer to the other world, acts in sleep are in a form closer to (their) spiritual significance. As when a person went to Ibn Sirin²⁵³ and said: "In my sleep I saw that there was a ring in my hand and I was sealing the vulvas of women and the mouths of men." (Ibn Sirin) said: "Thou art a caller to prayer. In the month of Ramadan²⁵⁴ dost thou give the call to prayer before the dawn?" The other replied: "That is so."

²⁵³ Ibn Sirin: Muhammad bin Sirin, the son of a slave, he became a noted ascetic of Basrah. He was a scholar and the author of a popular book on the interpretation of dreams. He died in AH 110/729CE.

²⁵⁴ Ramadan: the month of fasting.

Now, look how the spirit and true nature of his actions were shown to him in sleep. The call to prayer is in the form of a sound and a reminder that during Ramadan his spirit and true nature prevent eating and sexual intercourse (during the daylight hours). It is remarkable that all of these proofs of the Resurrection are shown to thee during sleep, yet thou thyself art not aware of their significance. It is related in the Traditions that on the Day of Resurrection the world will be brought up in the form of an ugly old hag, and so forth. Whoever sees her will say: "*We seek refuge with God from thee!*" It will be said (to them): "This is that world for which you destroyed yourself in seeking it!" They will be so ashamed—whoever sees her—that they will want to be taken off to hell in order to escape that ignominy.

The parable of this disgrace is this story which they tell: "One of the kings gave a woman to his son. On that night, the king's son drank too much wine. When he was drunk, he went out to find his wife. Heading for the bridal chamber, he became lost and went out of the palace. He continued walking until he reached a place where a lamp could be seen in a house. He thought that he had found the bride's room. Upon entering, he saw some people sleeping. No matter how much he called out, no one answered him. He thought they were all asleep. He saw one person sleeping under a new wrapper. He said to himself: 'This must be my bride.'

"He lay down beside her and removed the wrapper from her. A sweet smell reached his nostrils. 'Doubtless this is my bride,' he said to himself, 'she is using such a fine scent.' He had intercourse with her until morning. He inserted his tongue into her mouth and he received some liquid from her. He thought that she was being very cordial and was pouring rose water on him.

"When day broke and he came to his senses, he looked about. It was a crypt²⁵⁵ of the fire worshippers!²⁵⁶ The sleepers were corpses! She who had the new wrapper, the one he thought was his bride, was an ugly old woman who had died nearby. The scent was her embalming spices, and the liquid that had flowed over was her filth! When he looked, he found himself completely covered with filth. There remained an acidity and noisomeness from her saliva in his mouth and throat. He was so mortified with shame and humiliation that he wished he could be struck dead. He feared that his father might come with his army and find him in this condition. And while he was pondering this, the king and

²⁵⁵ "crypt" (*dukhamah*): crypt, tomb. When used in reference to the "fire worshippers" (Zoroastrians), it means an unroofed circular structure in which the dead are exposed to the elements and the predatory creatures, especially vultures.

²⁵⁶ "fire worshippers" (*gabr*): this word usually refers to the Zoroastrians for whom fire is sacred, but is also used more broadly to mean "pagan, infidel." Ghazzali here means the Zoroastrians.

commanders of his army came in search of him. They saw him in the middle of his shameful act. He wished that the earth would open up and swallow him so that he could escape this ignominy."

So, tomorrow, the people of the world and all its pleasures and carnal appetites will all appear thus. The traces that remain of the commerce of the carnal appetite in their souls will resemble her filth and the bitterness that remained in his throat and mouth and on his body, but they will be even more shameful and horrendous.

The reality of the working of that world cannot be comprehended by parables from this world; however, this is an illustration of the description of one of the fires which burns in (one's) soul and spirit (*jān*), while his body is unaware of it. It is the fire of shame and abashment.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE THIRD FIRE: (This is) the fire of regret. This is being deprived of the beauty of the Divine Presence and losing the hope of ever achieving that happiness. Its cause is the blindness and ignorance that that (soul), which has not acquired spiritual knowledge by study or earnest striving, takes with it from this world. Also, the soul has not been purified so that the beauty of the Divine Presence may be made manifest in it after death; there is no reflection in the mirror if the tarnish of sins and the appetites of the world have darkened one's soul to the extent that one remains blind.

The similitude of this fire is that thou imaginest that thou art with some people. Thou hast arrived at a place in the dark of night where there are many pebbles, but their colors cannot be seen. Thy companions say: "Take as many of these pebbles as thou canst, because we have heard that there is great profit in them."

So every one of them picks up as many as he can, but thou dost not pick up anything. Thou sayest: "It is absolute foolishness for me to trouble myself and burden myself with a heavy load for the present when I don't even know whether they will be of any use tomorrow!"

Then, the others leave that place carrying heavy loads, but thou accompany them empty-handed and laughing at them, taking them for fools. Thou ridiculest them and sayest: "Anyone who has reason and perspicacity travels in ease and calmness, just as I am doing! Anyone who is a fool makes of himself an ass to carry a burden out of greed for the absurd!"

When day dawns and the sun's light shines, they look at their burdens. All of the pebbles are jewels and red rubies! The price of each stone is a hundred thousand dinars. Then the people were full of regret, saying: "Why did we not take more?" And thou who hast cheated thyself by not taking anything, thou art mortified and the fire of regret flares in thy soul (*jān*).

So, they sell their jewels and with the money purchase power and ease in the land, eat what they desire, and live where they choose. But thou! For thee, there is hunger and nakedness. Thou art enslaved and given hard tasks to perform. No matter how much thou sayest to them: "Give me a portion of your ease,"— '*Pour on us some water or some of that wherewith God hath provided you.*' They say: '*Lo! God hath forbidden both to the disbelievers, who took their religion for a sport and pastime; (Q. 7:50-1)*—they say: "Yesterday thou wert laughing at us; today we are laughing at thee." *Though ye laugh at us, yet we laugh at you even as ye are laughing. (Q. 11:38)*

This is the parable of the regret at the loss of the blessings of heaven and seeing the Divine Presence, and the treasure is the metaphor of the acts of devotion. The darkness is the metaphor of the world. But those who did not pick up the jewels of devotion and said: "Now, why should we trouble ourselves for the cash (to earn) a deferred comfort, about which there is a doubt?"—they will cry out tomorrow: '*Pour water on us...*' (Q. 7:50) Why should they not be regretful? For tomorrow, God will shower so many different kinds of happiness and comfort upon the spiritually astute and the devout that the comforts of this world could not compete with them for an instant! On the contrary, the least person who is introduced into hell is given ten times (the torment) of this world. This similitude is not of dimension and amount; rather, it is in the spirit of comfort, and that is joy and pleasure. As they say: A jewel is like ten dinars in value and spirit, not in opulence, weight, and dimension.

13. SPIRITUAL FIRE IS MORE TERRIBLE THAN PHYSICAL FIRE

Thou hast become acquainted with the three kinds of spiritual fire. Now, know that this fire is more terrible than that which consumes the body, for the body is not aware of pain so long as its effect does not reach the vital spirit (*jān*). Then, the pain from the body reaches the vital spirit and becomes terrible. Consequently, the fire and pain that come out of the vital spirit, is certainly greater. This fire ignites from within the vital spirit and does not come in from outside.

The cause of all kinds of pain is that a thing required by nature is overcome by its contrary. It is required by the nature of the body that it maintain its structure and that its parts be agreeable together. Should an injury separate them, one from another, its contrary appears; it becomes painful. The wound separates one part from another, but a fire burns in all parts and separates (all the) parts from one another. Then each part receives the pain from another. For this reason, the pain of the fire is greater.

So, the pain of that thing which is required by the nature of the soul, should its contrary become established, is greater within the vital spirit. The requirements of the nature of the soul are the spiritual

knowledge of God and seeing Him. Should blindness, which is contrary (to the requirement of the nature of the soul), become established in it, there is no end to its pain. If it were not the case that souls become sick in this world before death, the pain of blindness (to the spiritual knowledge of God) would be perceived in this world in like manner. But when the hands and feet become exhausted and numbness appears in them so that if fire touched them, one would not know it immediately. If the numbness passes and (the member) is in the fire, one instantly feels great pain. In the same way, souls become fatigued in this world (and do not feel the fire), but that numbness departs at death. The fire flares in one's vital spirit instantly. This does not come from some other place, for he himself has brought it with himself. It was inside his soul, but since he did not have firm belief, he had not spotted it until he knew with sure vision. *Nay, would that ye knew with a certain knowledge! For ye will behold hellfire.* (Q. 102:5-6)

The reason that the Religious Law has explained and described physical hell and heaven so much is so that all people may know and understand it. However, whatever thou sayest, these words are considered modest, for they do not convey the harshness (of hell) and magnitude (of heaven). It is as though thou sayest to a child: "Learn something, for if thou dost not, thy father's power and authority will not be left to thee and thou wilt never achieve happiness." (The child) will not comprehend this and it will not seem very important to him. However, if thou sayest: "The teacher will punish thee," he will be afraid of this, because he understands it. Just as the teacher's punishment is real, but the fire of being deprived of the rank of his father, though also real, will not chastise a child, so too, the physical hell is real as is the fire of being deprived of the beauty of the Divine Presence. The physical hell in comparison with the hell of deprivation is nothing more than a box on the ears when put beside the deprivation of power and authority.

14. THE STATIONS OF THE TRAVELS OF THE SPIRIT IN THE WORLD

Certainly thou mayest object that this explanation and detailed account is contrary to that which all of the religious scholars say and that which is found in books. They have said that these matters cannot be known save by following authority and listening.²⁵⁷ There is no room for the insight in this.

Know that the nature of their objection to this has already been noted. This discourse is not contrary to that; for everything that they have

²⁵⁷ "listening" (*samāʿ*): Here the word *samāʿ* is being used in its general sense: that is, referring to audition. *Samāʿ* has another meaning, the state of ecstasy induced by music and dance, especially the whirling dance of the dervishes, and Ghazzali uses it in that sense later on. See Chapter Eight of the Second Pillar.

said in the exposition of the Hereafter is correct. However, it does not go beyond an exposition of the perceptible things. Either they did not know about the spiritual aspects, or they knew, but did not expound upon them, because most people would not comprehend them.

Anything that is physical will not be made known except by following the authority of and listening to a scholar of the Law. However, the other part is a branch of the spiritual knowledge of the true nature of the spirit (*rūḥ*). There is a way to learn this by means of insight and internal witnessing. It comes to the person who has separated himself from his own homeland and not stayed where he was born and in his home. He embarks on the journey on the path of religion. By this homeland, we do not mean a city or house that is the homeland of the body; the journey of the body has not value. Instead, (we mean the homeland of) the spirit which is the true nature and inmost mystery of a human being. It has a resting place that has appeared from there, and its homeland is there; hence, it has to make a journey. Along the road, there are stages for (the soul), and each station is another world.

Its first station is perceptible things, then imaginings, then suppositions, and then plausibilities,²⁵⁸ which is the fourth station. It is in this fourth station that one will find the true nature of one's self. Before that, it has no knowledge of it.

THE FIRST STATION: These worlds may be understood by a parable: as long as a person is in the world of perceptible things, his degree is like that of a moth which throws itself against a lamp. It has the sense of sight, but not imagination and memory. It flies from the darkness seeking an opening. It thinks that the lamp is a window and throws itself against it. When it feels the pain of the fire, that pain does not stay in its memory, nor in its thought, because it has no thought or memory, as it has not achieved that degree. Consequently, it dashes itself against the lamp again and again until it perishes. If it had had the faculties of thought and the memory of imaginings, it would not have returned after one painful experience. When other (higher) animals are struck once, they will run away whenever they see a stick, for its image has remained in their memories. Therefore, the first stage is of perceptions.

THE SECOND STATION: imaginings. As long as a person is at this degree, he is the equal of the beasts. Until he experiences some irritation, he does not know that he should flee. However, if he is discomfited once, he knows to flee the next time.

²⁵⁸ "plausibilities" (*ma'qūlāt*): that is, things that are consistent with reason.

THE THIRD STATION: suppositions. When one reaches this degree, he is at the level of sheep and horses, which flee from unseen trouble, for they know it is an enemy and may injure them. A sheep may never have seen a wolf, and a horse may never have seen a lion, but when a wolf or lion is spotted, they flee and know that it is an enemy, while they do not run away from cattle, elephants, or camels, which are much larger in size. This is a discernment which has been implanted in them by means of which they recognize their own enemies.²⁵⁹ But with all of this, they are not able to take precautions against that which may happen tomorrow, which is in:

THE FOURTH STATION: This is the station of plausibilities. When a person arrives here, he has passed the limit of all animals. Up to this point, he has been accompanying them. In fact, it is here that he truly reaches the world of humanity. He sees things to which the senses, images, and suppositions cannot go, and which caution him about the future. He wrests the spirit (*rūh*) and true nature of matters from their appearance and perceives them (as they truly are). He perceives the limit of the true nature of every thing, (the true nature of) which comprises the totality of that thing's forms. The things which can be perceived in this world are not infinite, for everything which is perceptible by the senses does not exist except in physical bodies, and physical bodies cannot be other than finite.

One's traffic and walking in the world of perceptible things is like walking on the earth, which all people can do. One's walking in the fourth world—in purely spirits and the true natures of affairs—is like walking on water. One's traffic in suppositions is like being in a ship, and one's degree is between water and land.

There is a station beyond the level of plausibilities which is the station of the prophets, saints, and spiritually insightful. Its similitude is like traveling on air. It was for this that the Prophet (S) was asked: "Did Jesus (A) walk on water?" He answered: "That is true, *but if his certainty had been greater, he would have traveled through the air.*"²⁶⁰

Therefore, the stages of a person's journey are in the worlds of conceptions until one reaches the last of the stations, which is at the degree of the angels. Thus, from the last degree of the beasts to the highest degrees of the angels, are the stations of a man's ascension, and the lows and highs are his work. One is in danger of falling to the lowest depths instead of reaching the highest heights. With reference to this danger, (this verse) was revealed: *Surely, We offered the trust to the*

²⁵⁹ That is to say: "instinct."

²⁶⁰ This Arabic sentence is followed in the text by Ghazzali's translation of it, omitted here. The reference is to the Prophet's Night Journey, or Ascension (*mi'raj*), which was through the air from earth to heaven

heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they shrank from bearing it and feared it; and man bore it. Surely, he is unjust, ignorant. (Q. 33:72)

Look at the degree of every inanimate solid body. It is unaware, therefore it is without rank. The angels are in the highest; for them there is no way beyond their own level. Indeed, the degree of every one is established upon him, as is said: *And there is none of us but has an assigned place. (Q. 37:164)* The (four-legged) beasts are the lowest of the low; there is no way for them to advance. Mankind is between the two and in a dangerous place. It is possible for him to ascend to the level of the angels or to descend to the level of the beasts. The meaning of “bearing of trust” is “assuming the covenant of danger.” Consequently, it is not possible for other than a human being to carry the burden of this trust.

The point is that if thou hadst said: “Most people have not said this,” thou wouldst know that it is not unusual for a traveler to be contrary to settled people. Most people are residents; the traveler is the exception. A person who has made sensory perceptions and images—the first station—his home and residence, will never uncover the truths and spirits of affairs. He will not be spiritual, nor will he know the rules of the spiritual. It is for that reason that there is less discussion about this in books.

15. DENIAL OF THE HEREAFTER BASED UPON WEAK SUPPOSITIONS IS ALSO UNLAWFUL

There is a party of fools who do not possess the power to know such matters insightfully, nor do they possess the good fortune to accept Religious Law. They are perplexed by the matter of the Hereafter and have become overcome by doubt. It may be that, as carnal appetite begins to overwhelm them and—as befits their nature—inspires them to deny the Hereafter, this denial is born in them. Satan teaches this.²⁶¹ They think that all that has come (to us) about the nature of hell is to inspire fear, and that all that has been said about heaven is blandishment. For these reasons, they indulge in following their appetite and cease to apply the Religious Law (to themselves). They despise those who do follow the Law, saying: “They have cheated themselves and are deceived.”

Where is there the power to inform such a fool about such secrets and proofs? Consequently, he must be invited to reflect upon one plain saying. He is told: “Even though thy mind has been mastered by the idea that the 124,000 prophets, all the saints, religious scholars, and wise men were in error and were deluded, and that thou in thine own

²⁶¹ “Teaches,” following the AA text (*tarbiyat*). HK has *tanzih* (transcendence, deanthropomorphism, purification, being superior to), which does not seem to fit here.

foolishness hast discovered this situation.²⁶² Well, is it not possible that the error is thine, that thou art the deluded one, that thou hast not learned the true nature of the Hereafter and hast not understood spiritual chastisement, and that thou hast not learned the aspects and similitudes of spiritual matters from the world of perceptible things?"

If the case is that he does not allow his own error, but says: "As I know that two is greater than one, in the same way I know that the soul (*rūh*) itself has no reality and it is not eternal. There can be neither ease nor torment for it after death; neither spiritual, nor physical." This person has a ruined temperament, and one should not be optimistic about him. He is one of those people about whom God Most High said: *And if thou call them to the guidance, they will even then never follow the right course.* (Q. 18:57)

But if he says: "The impossibility of this does not matter to me; that is, it is possible, but remotely. And since I do not consider this condition to be true, why should I spent my life in the cell of piety and be deprived of pleasures because of a weak supposition?"

Say to him: "Now that thou hast admitted this much, thou art obligated by the rule of reason to follow the way of the Law; for, even if the suspicion of a great danger is weak, people will flee from it. If thou intendest to eat some food and some one says: 'A snake has bitten into that food!' thou wilt withhold thy hand from it, even though thou dost suspect that that person may be lying and had said that so that he could eat it himself. However, since it is possible that he is speaking the truth, thou sayest to thyself: 'If I do not eat it, I can bear the hunger easily, but suppose I eat it and he is telling the truth? I might die!'

"In the same way, if thou fallest ill and (thy life) is in danger, and a charmer²⁶³ says to thee: 'Give me a silver coin²⁶⁴ and I shall write a charm for thee on paper and draw a design on it that will make thee better.' However strong thy belief is that an amulet has absolutely no connection with health, thou sayest: 'Perhaps he is speaking the truth. Giving up a silver coin for the recitation is easy.' If an astrologer says to thee: 'When the moon reaches such-and-such point, take such-and-such bitter medicine to become better.' Thou submitest to that discomfort upon his word. Thou sayest: 'It may be that he is speaking the truth. If he is lying, still, enduring that difficulty is easy.'"

So, to a reasonable person, the word of 124,000 prophets, together with all of the great of the world, such as saints and wise men, is

²⁶² "this situation" (*in hāl*): by these words Ghazzali is referring to the supposed error and delusions of the prophets and saints.

²⁶³ "charmer" (*ta'wīdh-shinās*): one who knows charms, spells, and incantations.

²⁶⁴ Silver coin (*diram*): From the Greek drachma." A small silver coin.

not less than the word of an astrologer or a charmer or a Christian²⁶⁵ physician so that, as (the sick person) says, he undertakes a small discomfort in order to escape a far greater sorrow and loss: it may be that he will obtain deliverance (from the illness). The sorrow and loss become trivial and relative. If a person calculates how long his life in this world is, and what a small fraction it is of the endless eternity which has no beginning with respect to the beginningless eternity which has no end,²⁶⁶ he knows that taking a little trouble is insignificant when set beside such great peril. He says to himself: "If they are speaking the truth, and I endure in such torment, what is the profit of the ease of this world, the days of which are passing few? And it is possible that they speak the truth!"

Eternity means that if the entire world were filled with millet and a bird was ordered to pick up one grain of millet every thousand years until all of that millet was consumed, eternity would not be at all diminished. Therefore, how can one endure that much time in torment—whether it be spiritual, physical, or mental? How great is the span of a life in this world in comparison with that? There is no reasonable person who, understanding this concept fully, does not know that proceeding along the path of caution and being wary of such a great danger is imperative, even though this causes some trouble and even though one has this suspicion. People travel in ships across the sea for trade. They undertake long journeys and endure many hardships. They all do this for an uncertain supposition.²⁶⁷ If (the Hereafter) is not certain for a man, well, there is a weak supposition. So, if one has mercy on oneself, one considers (the Hereafter) a possibility.

It was concerning this that the Commander of the Believers, Ali²⁶⁸ (R) debated an atheist and said: "If it is as thou sayest, both thou and we are delivered. But if it is as we say, we are delivered and thou art fallen and will remain in eternal torment."

That which the Commander of the Believers, Ali (R) said, he said in accordance with the deficiency of the intelligence of that atheist, not because he himself had any doubts about his faith. He knew that that atheist's understanding could not support the way of certainty.

So, know that anyone whoever busies himself with anything other than providing for the Hereafter is extremely foolish. The reason for this is heedlessness and not thinking. The carnal appetites of the world themselves will not give them respite long enough to think about these

²⁶⁵ Ghazzali uses the word *tarsā*, which usually means Christian, but can also refer to fire worshippers. It can also mean "fearful," but that does not seem appropriate here.

²⁶⁶ Thus both texts. *Abad* means "eternity without end" and *azal* means "eternity without beginning."

²⁶⁷ The supposition or hope that they will gain profit from their efforts.

²⁶⁸ Ali bin Abi Tālib, the fourth caliph and son-in-law of the Prophet.

things. If that were not so, it would be obligatory upon that person who knows with certainty, that person who knows with a strong supposition, and that person who knows with a weak supposition—all of them, by the rule of reason—to be wary of that great danger and take up the way of safety and caution. *Peace!*

The discourse upon the Topic of Being a Muslim concerning the Knowledge of the Self, the Knowledge of God Most High [*exalted be His glory, great be His power, may His excellence be honored, there is no god other than He*], the Knowledge of the World, and the Knowledge of Hereafter is completed. [After this we shall commence the Pillars of Muslim Conduct, *if God Most Powerful and Unique wills it.*]²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ From the AA text.

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

by Imam Ghazzali

THE PILLARS OF BEING A MUSLIM

*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,
and We seek His aid*

Now that thou hast finished (the study of) spiritual knowledge in the Prolegomena on Being a Muslim and have come to know the self and God Most High, and have learned, too, about this world and the Hereafter, we should turn to a study the Pillars of personal behavior of Being a Muslim.²⁷⁰

From what has come before, it is clear that human (spiritual) happiness²⁷¹ lies in the knowledge of God Most High and in His service;²⁷² the basis of this knowledge has been learned from the Four Topics; let the service be learned from the Four Pillars:²⁷³

The first is that one keep oneself prepared for worship. This is the Pillar of the Acts of Worship.²⁷⁴

The second is that one's living, doing, and resting be according to the rules of courtesy. This is called the Pillar of Mutual Relations.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁰ "Being a Muslim": *musulmānī*.

²⁷¹ "(spiritual) happiness" (*sa'ādāt*): that is, salvation.

²⁷² "service": The Persian *bandagī* has a general meaning of "slavery, bondage, servitude; service." In the language of religion, it has come to mean absolute devotion to the service of God. Ghazzali frequently uses the concrete common noun *bandah*, meaning "bondsmen, slave, servant" simply to indicate a person or an individual, being a shortened form of "servant of God" (*bandah-yi khudā*). In this translation, we have eschewed "slave (of God)" in favor of "servant (of God) for *bandah* and its Arabic equivalent *‘abd*, because "slave" implies a lack of free will, choice, and ultimately responsibility for one's actions—unless the text is clearly referring to a slave or slavery. Though Ghazzali argues for a kind of predestination, at the same time he does not absolve us of personal responsibility. In the opinion of the translator, to be a slave of God is to deny personal responsibility, while to be a servant of God is a tremendous honor and responsibility. Unlike the Arabic *‘abd*, the Persian *bandah* does not carry a meaning of "worshipper," nor does *bandagī* equate with *‘ibādah* which means "worship" in Arabic.

²⁷³ The word being translated here as "Pillar" is the Arabic *rukn* (pl. *arkān*). It is the word also commonly translated as "pillar" when referring to the five pillars of the Faith (*arkān-i dīn*) and should not be confused with that usage. See also the Translator's Preface.

²⁷⁴ "Pillar of the Acts of Worship": *Rukn-i ‘Ibādāt*.

²⁷⁵ "Pillar of Mutual Relations": *Rukn-i Mu‘āmalāt*.

The third is that one keep one's soul free from the taint of repugnant characteristics. This is the Pillar of the Destroyers.²⁷⁶

The fourth is that one adorn one's soul with praiseworthy qualities. This is the Pillar of the Deliverers.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ "Pillar of the Destroyers": *Rukn-i Muhlikāt*.

²⁷⁷ "Pillar of the Deliverers": *Rukn-i Munjīyāt*.

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

BY IMAM GHAZZALI

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

THE FIRST PILLAR: CONCERNING THE ACTS OF WORSHIP

In this Pillar, there are ten chapters:

THE FIRST CHAPTER: [Concerning]²⁷⁸ Correcting Orthodox Belief

THE SECOND CHAPTER: [Concerning] Engaging in the Quest for Knowledge

THE THIRD CHAPTER: [Concerning] Performing the Obligatory Purity

THE FOURTH CHAPTER: [Concerning] Performing Formal Prayer

THE FIFTH CHAPTER: [Concerning] Paying the Poor Rate

THE SIXTH CHAPTER: [Concerning] Fasting

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER: [Concerning] Performing the Pilgrimage

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER: [Concerning] Reciting of the Quran

THE NINTH CHAPTER: [Concerning] Remembrance and Glorification

THE TENTH CHAPTER: [Concerning] Observing the Periods and Times of Worship²⁷⁹

²⁷⁸ "Concerning" (*dar*) inserted here and in the following Chapters follows the AA text; HK does not use it.

²⁷⁹ "private devotions and times of worship" (*wird-hā wa waqt-hā-yi 'ibādat rāst dāsh-tan*); See Chapter Ten and Note 625.

CHAPTER ONE: CONCERNING THE ATTAINMENT OF ORTHODOX BELIEF²⁸⁰

Know that the first duty incumbent upon whoever becomes a Muslim is to know and believe the meaning of the utterance *There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Messenger of God*, which he pronounces with his tongue, understands in his soul, and believes so that he entertains no doubt about it. When he has believed and his soul is established firmly upon (that belief)—so that no doubt can touch it—it is sufficient as the basis of being a Muslim. Knowing it with evidence and proof is an individual duty²⁸¹ incumbent upon every Muslim. The Prophet (S) did not command the Arabs to seek proofs, to study theology, or to look for doubts and the replies to them; rather, he was content with belief and faith. More is not appropriate for the degree of the common folk.

However, there will inevitably be a group of people who know the manner of expressing themselves in speech and can explain the reasons for this belief. If someone falls into doubt, the words of (such a speaker) can remove that doubt before it spreads to the illiterate. This art is called “scholastic theology.”²⁸² It is a collective duty;²⁸³ one or two people possessing such abilities are enough for every town. Let belief suffice for the illiterate and let the theologian be the provost and guardian of their belief.

But beyond these two stations,²⁸⁴ there is another way to the true nature of spiritual knowledge. The beginning of this is earnest striving: so long as a person does not travel the way of earnest striving and ascetic discipline (completely, he will not attain that degree and it is not right for him to claim that (he has). The harm of (claiming) that is greater than its benefit. He is like the person who takes medicine before abstaining (from food). It is to be feared that he will perish, for that medicine will change according to the ingredients²⁸⁵ of his stomach and negate the effect of the medicine, and his discomfort and illness will increase.

²⁸⁰ The difference between the title of this chapter and the form it is given in Ghazzali's Table of Contents directly above is in accordance with both texts.

²⁸¹ “individual duty”: *fard-i ‘ayn*. See Note 974.

²⁸² “scholastic theology”: *kalām*. Guillaume quotes the following definition of *kalām*: “the science of the foundations of the faith and the intellectual proofs in support of the theological verities.” *The Legacy of Islam*, ed. Sir Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 265.

²⁸³ “collective duty”: *fard-i kifāyat*. See Note 974.

²⁸⁴ “these two stations”: the common faith of the heart and faith based upon deductive reasoning.

²⁸⁵ “ingredients” (*akhlāt*): or “humors,” a reference to the four humors of the body: blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy.

The contents of the Prolegomena were a proof-giver and an indication of the true nature of spiritual knowledge so that any one who is so inclined may pursue it. No one can seek its true nature save the person who has no ties to this world to distract him. Nothing will occupy him during his entire lifetime except the seeking of God Most High; but this is a difficult and lengthy task.

Consequently, we refer to that which is the nourishment of all folk—and that is the belief of the orthodox—so that each person may establish this belief in his soul, for this belief will be the seed of his (spiritual) happiness.

DISCLOSING BELIEF IN ISLAM

Know that thou hast been created and that thou hast a Creator Who is the Creator of all the universe and all that it contains. He is One. He has neither partner nor associate. He is Unique, for He has no peer. He always was; His existence has no beginning. He always shall be; there is not end to His existence. His existence in eternity and infinity is necessary, for annihilation cannot touch Him. His existence is by His own essence. He needs nothing; but nothing is unneedful of Him. Rather, He is established by His Own essence, and everything else is established through Him.

TRANSCENDENCE

In His Own essence, He is neither substance, nor accident. He does not manifest Himself in any (physical) body. He is not like anything else, and nothing is like Him. He has no form. Questions of quantity, purpose, and manner do not pertain to Him. He is free from anything that be conceived by the mind or imagination concerning His quantity and quality, for He is the Creator of all the attributes of created things. He was not created by any attribute; rather, He is the Creator of all that may be imagined or supposed. Smallness, largeness, and amount do not affect Him as they are attributes of physical bodies in the world, and He has no physical body, nor is He connected with any physical body. He is neither on nor at any place. Moreover, He Himself occupies no space and cannot be restricted by limitations of space. All that is in the universe is beneath His Throne, and the Throne is subsumed to His power. He is above the Throne, but not as a body above a body, for He is not a physical body. The Throne does not support or carry Him; rather, the Throne and its bearers are all borne by Him and they are laden with His grace and power.

Today, He is of the same character that He was in eternity without beginning before He created the Throne; He shall endure in the same way into eternity without end, for neither He nor His attributes are

affected by change or alteration. It would not befit God if change were (to affect) an imperfect attribute. If (change) were (to affect) a perfect attribute it would have been imperfect and in need of this perfection. Need is (for) the created and does not befit God.

Since He is free from all of the attributes of created things, in this world He is something to be known, and in the next world, to be seen. Just as in this world He is known to be ineffable and inscrutable, so in the next world He will be seen ineffable and inscrutable, but that seeing will not be of the nature of the seeing of this world.

POWER

While He does not resemble anything, He has power over all things. His omnipotence is perfect, unaffected by inability, deficiency, or weakness. Indeed, whatever He has desired, He has done; and whatever He desires, He does. The seven heavens, the earth, the Throne, the Pedestal, and all that exists are subdued by His power and subservient in its grasp. No other holds any thing. He has neither aide nor companion in creation.

KNOWLEDGE

He knows everything there is to be known. His knowledge encompasses all things. Nothing proceeds, from on high to the earth, without His knowing it; for all proceed from Him and appear from His power. He knows the number of the grains of sand in the desert and the leaves on the trees, and the number of thoughts in heart. And the atoms of the earth and the air are disclosed to His knowledge, as well as the number of the heavens.

WILL

All that there is in the world, all is by His desire and will. Nothing—of the few to the numerous, the big and the little, good and evil, obedient and rebellious, unbelief and belief, profit and loss, increase and decrease, sorrow and ease, sickness and health—proceeds except by His decree and pleasure, and by His judgment and command. If all the world were gathered together—jinn, mankind, devils, and angels, they would not be able to move one particle of the world, or lift it, or increase it, or decrease it without His desire: all would be helpless and incapable. Indeed, nothing comes to pass save that which He desires. Whatever He desires to be cannot be prevented by anything or anyone. All that was, all that is, and all that shall be, are by His contrivance and decree.

HEARING AND SIGHT

Just as He knows all that there is to be known, He sees and hears all that there is to be seen or heard. Near and far are equal in His hearing; darkness and light are equal in His sight. The sound of the feet of an ant in the black of night does not escape His power of hearing; the color and shape of a worm under the earth is not beyond the power of His sight. His sight is not by eye, nor is His hearing by ear, just as His knowledge is not by thought and contrivance; for His creating is not by means of (physical) tools.

SPEECH

His commands are compulsory upon all creation and His information—the information He has given about anything—is truth. His promises and His threats are real. His commands, notices, promises, and threats are all His speech. Just as He is Living, Knowing, Capable of anything, Seeing, and Hearing, He also speaks. He spoke to Moses (A) without an intermediary. His speech is not by mouth, tongue, lips, and teeth. As it is in the soul of a person, it has no articulation or sound; that is, it is not in distinct sounds, for the speech of God Most High is purer and superior to those characteristics. The Quran, the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and all the books of the prophets are His speech. His speech is one of His attributes, and all of His attributes are eternal and have always existed.²⁸⁶ As the essence of God, *may He be praised and exalted*, is known in our souls and remembered with our tongues—and our knowledge is created, but the Known is eternal. Our remembrance is created, but the Remembered is eternal. The essence of His speech is, in the same way, eternal and kept in our souls, read with our tongues, and written in books. The thing kept is uncreated, but the keeping is created. The thing read is uncreated, but the reading is created. The written word is uncreated, but the writing is created.

ACTS

He is All-Knowing. Everything in the universe is His creation. Everything that He created has been created so that nothing could be better or finer than it is. If all the intellects of all reasoning creatures were combined and they pondered how to make this kingdom more beautiful or to arrange it in a better fashion, they would be unable (to do

²⁸⁶ This declaration affirms the view of the Ash'arites (of whom Ghazzali was the greatest thinker) that the Quran was eternal in God, but its expression in words or human language had been in time. Syedur Rahman, *An Introduction to Islamic Philosophy* (Dacca: Mullick Bros., 1956), p. 125.

so), for they would either omit something or add something.²⁸⁷ Those who think that they could improve upon it are in error and ignore the mystery of its wisdom and advantage. Indeed, they are like the blind person who enters a palace and all of its furnishing are in their proper places, but he does not see them. When he stumbles on something, he complains: "Why did they put it in my way?" He himself is not on the (right) path, for he does not see the way.

So, everything He created, He created justly and wisely, and He created it perfectly. He created things as they ought to be. If something could have been more perfect than it is and He did not create it that way, then He would have been either incapable or miserly, and these two attributes are impossible for Him. Thus, whatever He created, including sorrow, illness, poverty, ignorance, and weakness—all are just. Oppression cannot come from Him, for oppression is to seize another's property, and it is not possible for Him to seize another's property and never shall be, because it is not possible for there to be a proprietor other than He! Whatever is and was and may be, whoever is and was and may be—all are His property and He is their sole proprietor. Therefore, He is incomparable and partnerless.

THE HEREAFTER

He created the world of two kinds: the world of physical bodies and the world of spirits. He made the physical world the stopping place of human spirits so that they might collect from it the provisions for the next world. Each person has an allotted time to be in this world. At its end is death and (his time) cannot be increased or decreased. When death comes, the spirit is separated from the body.

At the Resurrection, which is the Day of Reckoning and Retribution, the soul is given a body,²⁸⁸ revived, and all are roused. Every person sees his own deeds written on a scroll so that he may be reminded of all that he has done. The amount of his rebellion and his sinning is made known and weighed in a scale that is prepared for this function and does not resemble any earthly scale.

THE BRIDGE

Then, all are commanded to cross the Bridge. That bridge is narrower than a hair and sharper than a sword blade. Everyone who, in

²⁸⁷ Thereby throwing it out of the balance of perfection.

²⁸⁸ "body" (*kālbud*): this body is different from the earthly body, as Ghazzali explains in the Prolegomena. See above.

this world, stood firmly on the Right Path²⁸⁹ shall pass across that bridge with ease; but whoever did not know the right path shall not find a footing on the bridge and shall fall into hell.

At the beginning of the bridge, they will be stopped and questioned about all that they did. The true nature of honesty will be sought from the honest, while the hypocrites and the doubters will be pointed out and disgraced.

One group will be sent to heaven without any reckoning; another group will be questioned gently. However, another group (will be questioned) harshly and in the end all of the unbelievers will be consigned to hell and none will ever be released from it. Of the Muslims, the obedient will be sent to heaven and the rebellious to hell. Accordingly, whoever receives the intercession of the prophets or the saints is forgiven; whoever does not is carried off to hell and punished according to the amount of his sins, but in the end, he will be brought to heaven through the intercession of the Prophet (S).

THE MESSENGER

As God Most High has ordained this and has arranged the works and conditions of a person thus, so that some are causes of his happiness and others are causes of his misfortunes, and since a person cannot comprehend these things on his own, He created messengers out of the wisdom of His grace and mercy. He decreed that some persons who, in the eternity without beginning are decreed on the perfection of their (spiritual) happiness, be informed of this secret. He gave them a message and sent them to the people to disclose to them the path to happiness and misfortune so that no one may have an excuse against God, may He be honored and glorified.

And, last of all, He sent our Messenger (S). He caused his prophethood to reach the level of perfection so that nothing more could be added to it. Because of this, He made him the Seal of the Prophets; no other prophet will come after him. He commanded all creation, human and jinn, to follow him. He made him the Lord of all of the messengers, and He made his Helpers and Companions the best of helpers and companions, *may God bless them all*.

²⁸⁹ The Right Path (*ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*): This is a phrase taken from the First Chapter of the Holy Quran: *Guide us on the Right Path*. (Q. 1:5) The word used for "bridge" in this section is the same as that used for "path" in the Quran: *ṣirāṭ*. This section is about the narrow bridge over the fires of hell that the resurrected must pass over to gain paradise. If their sins outweigh their good deeds, they will be unable to pass across and fall

CHAPTER TWO: CONCERNING THE QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE

Know that the Prophet (S) spoke thus: "*The quest for knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim.*" Seeking knowledge is a religious duty incumbent upon all Muslims.

All of the scholars have disputed (about the meaning of his words): "What knowledge is this (to which the Prophet referred)?" The scholastic theologians²⁹⁰ say that it is the science of scholastic theology by which the spiritual knowledge of God Most Might is obtained. The religious jurists say that it is the knowledge of religious jurisprudence by which the lawful and unlawful are distinguished. The Traditionists say that is the study of the Traditions and the Practice (of the Prophet), which are the sources of the religious studies. The mystics say that is the knowledge of the states of the soul, for the way of the servant (of God) to God is through his soul.

Each of these groups exalts its own knowledge. Our view is that one particular knowledge is not meant (by the Prophet's words) and that neither are all of these studies required. However, it is a distinction that gives rise to this difficulty:

Know that whoever becomes a Muslim or reaches puberty at mid-morning is not required to learn these sciences, but knowing the meaning of "*There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Messenger of God*" becomes obligatory immediately. He knows this when he accepts orthodox belief,²⁹¹ which we have addressed in the previous chapter.²⁹² However, this does not mean that he must master the intellectual proofs for this; that is not obligatory. Instead, he accepts and believes. (The knowledge of) all these details is not obligatory (upon every Muslim) either, but in general he must believe in the attributes of God Most High, the attributes of the Messenger (S), the attributes of the Hereafter, Paradise, hell, and the Resurrection. He has a God of such a nature; on His Prophet's word, he is answerable to Him. If he is obedient, he will achieve (spiritual) happiness after death, but if he sins, he will be treated harshly.

After learning this, he becomes obligated to know two kinds of knowledge: one pertains to the soul, the other pertains to physical acts.²⁹³

²⁹⁰ "scholastic theologians" (*mutakallimān*): The students and expounders of *kalām*, See Note 282 above.

²⁹¹ "orthodox belief" (*i'tiqād-i ahl-i sunnat*): i.e., the belief of those who follow the practice (*sunnat*) of the Prophet.

²⁹² Chapter One, above.

²⁹³ "physical acts": literally, acts of the members of the body (*a'māl-i jawāriḥ*); acts involving the body.

That which pertains to physical acts is of two kinds: one is the knowledge of things which ought to be done, the other is the knowledge of things which ought not to be done.

AS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE of what ought to be done, it is thus: If a person becomes a Muslim in the mid-morning, when it is time for the noon obligatory formal prayer,²⁹⁴ it is an obligation upon him to learn about obligatory purity and formal prayer. That much is a religious obligation,²⁹⁵ both points. However, the knowledge of that much which is the Practice of the Prophet is not a religious obligation; rather, it is the Prophet's Practice. When, for example, the time for sunset prayer comes, it is obligatory upon him to know that that formal prayer has three bows. No more than is obligatory.²⁹⁶

And (for the new Muslim), when the moon of Ramadan appears, fasting becomes an obligation. He must know to declare his Intention and that eating, drinking, and sexual intercourse are forbidden from dawn to sunset.

And if he has twenty Nishaburi dinars, it does not then immediately become obligatory upon him to learn about the obligatory poor rate,²⁹⁷ but after the passing of a full year, it becomes an obligation (upon him) to know the amount of the poor rate, how much should be given, to whom it should be given, and under what conditions. A knowledge of the (rites of the) Pilgrimage is not obligatory until one wishes to perform the journey. Its time is during his entire life.²⁹⁸

In the same way, whenever a matter occurs to one, whenever one has to perform some (religious) act, it is at that time that he is required to know it. For example, when he wants to marry, then he must know about

²⁹⁴ "obligatory formal prayer": This is a religious service, not "prayer" in the commonly accepted English usage, with explicit rules, forms, and requirements. In this sense it resembles a mass more than the simple utterance of a prayer to one's Creator. Therefore, in this translation we are employing this accurate (although somewhat cumbersome) phrase where Ghazzali uses the Persian term *namāz*, the equivalent of the Arabic *ṣalāh/salāt*. What is commonly called prayer in English is part of the meaning of *duʿā*, which we have generally translated in this book as "supplication." A *duʿā* may be either personal or group, but it has informality not found in *namāz*.

²⁹⁵ "religious obligation" (*faridah*): a duty imposed by God that is shirked at the peril of one's eternal soul, except in extraordinary circumstances.

²⁹⁶ That is, the obligatory prayer of three bows. Though praiseworthy, the knowledge of the additional sunset prayers, in keeping with the practice of the Prophet, is not a religious obligation in the sense that the three-bow prayer is.

²⁹⁷ "poor rate": (*zakāt*). Twenty Nishaburi dinars: this is the amount that Ghazzali regards as the threshold for payment of the poor rate. The dinar in his period was usually a gold coin. Dinars were minted in various weights.

²⁹⁸ That is, the greater Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) may be performed any time during his lifetime, subject to certain limitations and requirements: health, financial ability, responsibilities, sanity, majority, etc.

its rules and obligations. He must know what the wife's rights over the husband are: that he not approach her (carnally) during her menses, nor after that until she has purified herself. He must learn other things related to (marriage) in the same way.

If, for example, he has a trade, knowledge of that trade is obligatory upon him, so that, if he were a merchant, he must know what constitutes usury. Indeed, it becomes necessary for him to learn all of the rules of sale so that he may avoid illegal sales. It was for that that 'Umar²⁹⁹ (R) beat the merchants of the public market and sent them to learn (the rules of their trade), saying: "Whoever does not know the law of business should not sit in the markets; for he may earn unlawful profits and take usury while not realizing it!"

In the same way, there is a special knowledge for every profession. If, for example, one is a cupper,³⁰⁰ he must know what things may be cut from a person, which tooth to pull, what is the most dangerous, what medicines to apply to wounds, and the like. These kinds of knowledge alter with the circumstances of each person. It is not obligatory for a draper to master the science of cupping; nor is it obligatory upon the cupper to master the knowledge of the draper.

THESE ARE EXAMPLES of the knowledge of what ought not to be done. As for what ought not to be done, knowledge of this is also obligatory, but is not the same for each person. If a person is one of those who wears silk clothes, or is in a place where wine is drunk and pork is eaten, or is in a place taken by force,³⁰¹ or he possesses unlawful property,³⁰² it is incumbent upon the religious teachers to teach him and to tell him what is forbidden so that he may refrain from such things.

²⁹⁹ 'Umar: 'Umar bin al-Khattab, the second of the rightly guided caliphs, ruled from Madinah AH13/634CE to AH23/644CE. His importance in the development of the Islamic empire and the spread of Islam is incalculable. During his reign Islamic sway spread from the Arabian Peninsula to Egypt, the Levant and Iran, an area larger than Western Europe. A good administrator, an energetic and practical man, he did not let practicality or the power of empire compromise his firm faith in the Prophet and his message of Islam; he is famous for his humility and lack of pomp and ceremony. He was abstemious in his personal life and demanded high standards from others. His daughter Hafsa was the Prophet's third wife. He was assassinated by a Persian slave, who was angered over 'Umar's decision regarding the slave's dispute with his master, a matter of a few dirhams.

³⁰⁰ "cupper" (*hajjām*): a practitioner of cupping, a method of drawing blood to the surface of the body by means of a glass vessel or cup evacuated by heat. It is closely related to venisection and was a common treatment of certain illnesses well into the 19th CE century. A medieval cupper was also often called upon to perform other medical tasks including surgery.

³⁰¹ "a place taken by force": a place seized illegally or usurped, such as the property of a tyrant.

³⁰² "unlawful property" (*māl-i ḥarām*): or, property unlawfully acquired.

If he is at a place, for example, where there is a mixing with women, it is obligatory upon him to know which of them are of close relationship and which are not,³⁰³ and which of them he may look upon and which of them he may not.

This, too, changes according to circumstances, for each person is exposed to different situations. It is not necessary for him to learn what others should know. It is not obligatory upon women to know, for example, that it is unlawful to divorce a woman during her menses, which learning is obligatory upon man who wishes to divorce.

AS FOR THOSE THINGS which pertain to the soul, they are of two kinds: one is related to the states of the soul, the other to beliefs.

AS FOR THAT WHICH IS RELATED to the states of the soul, this is an example: It is necessary to know that haughtiness and envy are unlawful, hypocrisy is unlawful, hatred is unlawful, self-conceit is unlawful, suspicion is unlawful, and the like. (Knowing) this is an individual obligation for all people, for no one is devoid of such feelings. Therefore, knowledge of this and knowledge of its treatment is necessary, as this is a kind of common ailment and cannot be remedied without knowledge. But (the knowledge of) such things as the (the laws of) selling, forward buying, renting, mortgaging, and the like which religious jurisprudence addresses are not obligations upon all. An individual obligation applies to the person who wishes to perform the transaction, and most people have no need of these things. However, the soul cannot be immune from those states.

AS FOR THE OTHER KIND that is related to belief: It is having a doubt in one's belief. It is incumbent upon such a person to remove it from his soul whenever that doubt concerns a belief which is inherently an obligation, or concerning a belief in which doubt is not permitted.

So, from all of this, it has become known that learning is a religious duty imposed upon all Muslims. No Muslim does not stand in need of some kind of knowledge, but such (necessary) knowledge is not of one kind. The obligations upon a person vary. Indeed, they change with conditions and times. However, there is no one without some kind of a need for knowledge. It is for this that the Prophet (S) said: "There is no Muslim for whom the seeking of knowledge is not a religious duty." That is, the search for the knowledge which he needs in his affairs.

³⁰³ "relationship": *mahram*. This refers to persons of the opposite sex who are of such a relationship that marriage is impossible with them, for example: siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. Since marriage with them is impossible, association is permissible. Persons of the opposite sex beyond these relationships are regarded as *nā mahram*, and their for association with them can only be in carefully controlled circumstances, if at all.

EXCURSUS: THE EXCUSE OF IGNORANCE IS NOT
ACCEPTABLE IN RELIGION

Since it has been made known that it is incumbent upon every person to learn the knowledge which he (needs) in the way of his dealings, thou hast come to realize that the illiterate is continually in danger, for he may have to do something, but he will do it ignorantly. He does not know that there is a (religious) rule regarding it. Whenever a person is overcome by the need to know some aspect of religious law—and such situations are many—he cannot take refuge in ignorance.

For example, if a person lies with his wife during her menstrual period, or after it but before her purifying bath, and then says: “I did not know the rule about this,” he is not excused.

And if a woman purifies herself before the dawn and does not make up the sunset and early evening obligatory prayers (of the previous evening) because she does not know to do this, or if a man divorces his wife while she is menstruating and does not know that this is unlawful, they are not excused. It will be said to him: “We told thee that acquiring knowledge is a duty. Why didst thou withhold (thyself) from this duty and fall into unlawfulness?” Such behavior is excusable only if it should be some unusual and unexpected occurrence.

EXCURSUS: NO WORK IS MORE HONORABLE THAN KNOWLEDGE

Now that thou hast learned that the illiterate person is never free from this danger, it becomes apparent from this that no activity in which a person engages will be superior to and more agreeable than learning. Whatever profession or trade a person engages in will be for the acquisition of the things of this world. Study is better than other occupations for most of the people in this world, because a student will be in one of these four states:

*[ONE]:*³⁰⁴ He is self-sufficient in the things of the world, either through inheritance for some other reason. Knowledge will guard his property and be the cause of his dignity and respect in the world. It will be the cause of his (spiritual) happiness in the Hereafter. This is one kind.

TWO: Another is not well-endowed with the things of the world, but is content with what he has and can make do with that. He knows the value of poverty in being a Muslim: the poor shall be in heaven five hundred years before the rich. For this person, knowledge will be the cause of his tranquillity in this world and his (spiritual) happiness in the Hereafter.

³⁰⁴ From the AA text.

THREE: A third person is he who knows that after acquiring knowledge he will receive a sufficient, lawful income from either the public treasury or the hands of the Muslims, without his pursuing the unlawful or accepting something from the hand of a tyrannical ruler.

Thus, for these three types, the acquisition of knowledge in this world is the best occupation.

FOUR: The fourth kind is the one who does not possess his own resources and his aim in learning is (acquiring the things of) this world. The age is such that one cannot seek one's needs except either from the stipend from a ruler, which comes from the wages of tribute and oppression; or from the people, (but) he cannot seek it without hypocrisy and degradation. It would be better for this type—or for anyone who acquires knowledge for the purpose of acquiring rank and wealth and who achieves wealth through knowledge—that he engage in some trade after he has finished his studies, for such a person becomes a devil of the human kind and many persons are ruined by him. Any uneducated person who looks at this person's receiving the forbidden and his chicanery in his amassing the things of this world may imitate him. The corruption among the people caused by such a person is much greater than his good. The fewer such learned men there are, the better! It is to be preferred that the worldly seek worldly things and not (become involved in) affairs of religion.

If some one should object that that person's knowledge will lead to the right path, as some have said: "*We studied the knowledge of other than God, but the knowledge turned us to God*"—we have not acquired knowledge for God, but it has led us to the Way of God—the answer is this: It was the study of the Book, the Practice of the Prophet, the secrets of the Hereafter, and the truths of the Religious Law which brought them to the Way of God. Furthermore, there must have been something inside them that was repulsed by their own gluttony for the world. They saw the great ones of the faith who had distanced themselves from the world, and they desired to emulate them. As that was their knowledge, and the age was thus, they were hopeful that they would take on the nature of their knowledge, not that their knowledge would become their servant.

However, these subjects that are studied today, such as disputation, religious creed, scholastic theology, narrative, and calamity,³⁰⁵ and these teachers in this era who have made all of their knowledge a snare (to capture the things) of this world—association with them and learning from them does not turn a man away from the way of (seeking) the world. *There is no information like examination.* Behold! Are most of them scholars of this world, or are they scholars of the

³⁰⁵ "disputation" (*khalāf*), "religious creed" (*madhhab*), "scholastic theology" (*kalām*), "narrative" (*qasaṣ*), and "calamity" (*lāmāt*), that is, the resurrection.

Hereafter? Is there a benefit for the people in witnessing their doings, or is there harm?

Yet, if there is some place a person adorned with piety following the way of the scholars amongst the forefathers, teaching knowledge in which there is fright and caution about the delusion of the world, then association with and observing such a person will be of benefit to any person, not to speak of being taught by him! The knowledge one learns will be useful; that is more important than anything else is. Useful knowledge is that which informs him of the contempt for the world and shows him the danger of the trials of the Hereafter. It will make plain the ignorance and foolishness of those who have devoted themselves to this world and who have turned their faces away from the next world, so that he will recognize the blight of envy, hypocrisy, conceit, greed, avarice, and love for this world and know its remedy. This knowledge is like water for the thirsty and like medicine for the sick for a person who is greedy for the world.

But the occupation of this person³⁰⁶ with religious jurisprudence, scholastic theology, disputation, and literature is like the sick man who takes medicine too powerful for his illness. Most of these studies sow the seeds of envy, hypocrisy, libertinism, hostility, greed, mercenariness, pride, and ambition for rank in the soul. The more he studies, the more firmly these things become established in his soul. Since he is mixing with a class skilled in divine law, for that is what they are engaged in, he will become so that even if he wants to repent from this way, it will be difficult and he will not be able to do so.

³⁰⁶ That is, the person greedy for the world.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCERNING OBLIGATORY PURITY

Know that God, *may He be praised and exalted*, says: *Truly God loves the repentant and those who are pure.*³⁰⁷ (Q. 2:222) God loves the pure. The Messenger (S) said: *Purity is half of faith.* He also said: *Islam is based upon cleanliness.* Therefore, do not suppose that all of the virtue and importance of purification refers (just) to the body and clothing and the use of water; rather, purity has four levels:

THE FIRST LEVEL is the purification of the inmost secret of the soul from everything other than God Most High. As He says: *Say 'God' and then leave them.* (Q. 6:91)³⁰⁸ The point of this is that when one is empty of all but God Most High, one may become occupied with and immersed in God Most High. This is the true realization of the phrase *There is no god but God.* This is the degree of the faith of the truly righteous.³⁰⁹ Being cleansed of other-than-God³¹⁰ is one half of faith. Until one is cleansed of other-than-God, one cannot be adorned with the remembrance of God Most High.

THE SECOND LEVEL is the purification of the external aspect of the soul from such foul traits as envy, pride, hypocrisy, greed, enmity, frivolousness, etc., in order to be adorned with pure and approved characteristics, such as humility, contentment, repentance, patience, fear, hope, love, etc. This is the degree of the faith of the devout. Being cleansed of blameworthy characteristics is half of faith.

THE THIRD LEVEL is the purification of the limbs and parts of the body from sins such as backbiting, lying, eating forbidden things, treachery, looking upon unrelated persons of the opposite sex,³¹¹ etc., so that one may be adorned with courtesy and obedience in all matters. This is the degree of the faith of ascetics. Keeping one's parts clean of all forbidden things is half of faith.

³⁰⁷ "pure": the word used here, *mutatahhirin*, refers to the state of purity called *tahārat* which has the specialized meaning of being purified (by *wuḍūʿ* or *ghusl*) and in a state to perform certain religious obligations such as formal prayer (*namāz*) and the reading of the Quran.

³⁰⁸ In the Quran, the sentence is completed thus: *Say 'God' and leave them to their wallowing as they play.*

³⁰⁹ "truly righteous": *ṣiddiqān*.

³¹⁰ "other-than-God": *ghayr Haqq*.

³¹¹ See Note 303 above.

THE FOURTH LEVEL is keeping the body and clothing free of impurities so that all of the body may be adorned with bowing and prostration and the fundamentals of formal prayer. This is the degree of Islamic purity; for the behavioral difference between Muslims and unbelievers is in this prayer. This purity too is half of faith.

Therefore, in this manner it may be understood that at all of the levels of faith, purity is one half. By the rule that half or more is the thing, (the Messenger) said: *Islam is established upon cleanliness*. Then, this purity of body and clothing, which all pay attention to and strive for, is the lowest degree of the purities. However, because this is easier and the carnal self also partakes of it—for cleanliness is pleasant, and the self is at ease in it, and all persons can see it and thereby know of one's purity—it is for this reason easier upon the people.

However, the carnal self has no profit in the purification of the soul from envy, pride, hypocrisy, and love of the world and the purification of the body from sin and evil. The eyes of people do not fall upon it—for it is visible to God, and not to mankind, and for this reason not everyone shows an interest in it.

EXCURSUS: UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS IS PRECAUTION LAWFUL?

This obligatory purification (of the body), although it is of the lowest degree, has much virtue, too, but on the condition that its rules are observed and that anxious distraction and excess do not affect it. When it reaches the limit of anxiety and excessiveness, it becomes repugnant and disliked, and it may become an offense. The precautions which the Sufis practice such as wearing footgear,³¹² wrapping the head with one's drawers (so that the head and face not be dirtied), requiring absolutely pure water, keeping a water pot so that no one puts his hand in it³¹³—all of these are good, but they should not complain about anyone among the religious jurists who does not observe these things, except under certain conditions. Moreover, it is not for Sufis to complain at all about jurists and others who do not take such (extra) precautions, for these precautions are good, but with six conditions:

THE FIRST CONDITION is that because of the time they take, they keep one from worthier matters. For example, if one is prevented by the

³¹² "footgear" (*jūrāb*): the Persian so translated can refer to boots, socks, or stockings; in other words, something on the feet. In modern Persian, it tends to refer to socks and stockings, things made of cloth, with separate words for shoes, boots, sandals, and the like.

³¹³ So as to eliminate the possibility of pollution of the water. The water pot is used for making ablutions and for cleansing oneself after natural bodily functions.

time consumed with these precautions from learning some knowledge, if one has the ability to do so, or meditating upon something so that an increase (of available time) leads to an insight, or working to provide for one's family or oneself, so that one will not have to beg from another or consume things which people should not, one should not occupy oneself with these (extra) precautions, for the other (obligations) are more important than the (extra) precautions of purity.

It is for this reason that the Companions of the Prophet never engaged in such precautions. They were busy with earnest striving in God's way, seeking knowledge, and matters more important than those (precautions). That was why they went barefooted, performed their prayers upon the earth, sat on the ground, and wiped their hands after eating on the soles of their feet. They were not wary of the sweat of beasts of burden, for they made a greater effort to purify the soul rather than the body. So, if a person is of this nature, the Sufis should not complain of him. However, it is not fitting for a person who, out of laziness, does not observe these precautions to complain of those who observe them, for observing them is superior to not observing them.

THE SECOND CONDITION is that one keep oneself from hypocrisy and frivolity in this, for whoever observes these precautions proclaims from head to toe: "I am an ascetic because I keep myself so pure." An avidity is born in him so that he fears lest he fall in the opinion of the people. He must examine himself in this and place his feet on the earth before people, travel the path of leniency, and make his preparations of precaution in private.³¹⁴ If his self struggles in this, he realizes that the calamity of hypocrisy has infected him. In this case, it is obligatory upon him that he travel the path of leniency, walk with naked feet, sit upon the earth, pray upon the bare earth, and cease the precautions. For hypocrisy is forbidden and the precautions are a recommended practice.³¹⁵ As he cannot avoid the forbidden except by ceasing to practice the precautions, it is obligatory upon him to abandon them.

THE THIRD CONDITION is to follow the way of leniency sometimes, but not turn away from the precautions incumbent upon oneself, just as the Messenger (S) purified himself with the water pot of a

³¹⁴ Ghazzali is not condemning excessive caution exhibited by many of the pious in following the expanded minutiae of the laws of purity, but he is pointing out that they can be impractical for ordinary folk in their daily lives and furthermore, can ensnare the practitioner in the vices of pride and contempt and ultimately hypocrisy with respect to those unable to devote so much time or resources to these things. Instead of making a public display of these preparations, he advises that such precautions be taken in private.

³¹⁵ Hypocrisy is forbidden (*harām*) by God's law. Violations of the Practice of the Prophet are at a lower level of gravity.

polytheist. ‘Umar (R) purified himself with the pitcher of a Christian woman. Most of the time, they performed their prayers upon the earth and they honored more those who slept upon the ground with nothing between them and the bare earth. Then, as one separates oneself from their conduct and deems it inappropriate, and one’s self does not permit one to conform to their (customs); that is sufficient proof that the self has found an eagerness for this precaution. (In this situation), it is important that one refrain from this.

THE FOURTH CONDITION is that one should abstain from any precaution which annoys the hearts of Muslims, for vexing the hearts of Muslims is forbidden, while abandoning the precaution is not; as when a person extends his hand to take one’s hand in greeting or in embrace—and that person’s hand is sweaty—it is forbidden to withhold one’s hand. Rather, a good nature and an approach that delight the soul of a Muslim in such a situation are more blessed and superior than a thousand precautions. In the same way, if a person steps upon one’s prayer-rug, uses one’s water pot for purification, or drinks water from one’s jug, it is not appropriate to forbid him and show displeasure; for when the Messenger (S) requested water from Zamzam, ‘Abbas (R) said: “Many have put their hands in that water and muddied it. Let me find a special pail and draw water for thee.” He replied: “No, I prefer the blessing of the hands of the Muslims.”

Most of these ignorant ascetics³¹⁶ do not know of these subtleties and pull back from a person who does not follow the precautions, injuring his feelings. It may happen that they will speak sharply to their (own) fathers, mothers, brothers, or friends if they touch their water pots or clothing. All of this is forbidden! How could it be lawful to insult people, which is forbidden, because of a precaution, which is not obligatory? Most of those who do this, being afflicted with arrogance, consider it a rare opportunity to withdraw from someone in this way in order to annoy him and to display their own purity and magnificence! They call others “those who have non-smelling noses,”³¹⁷ while the Companions used to accept them gently.

³¹⁶ “ignorant ascetics”: literally “ignorant reciters of the Quran” (*qurrāʾān-i jāhil*). “Reciters of the Quran” (*qurrāʾān*): the pious and holy; ascetics. While reading of the Quran is of course praiseworthy and an act of great piety, the term is also used perjoratively to refer to those make a show of it. There is often a suggestion of the taint of professional piety about them in literature.

³¹⁷ This word, *bi-khushm* or *bi-khashm*, has prompted lengthy notes in both AA and HK. Among the varied proposals, it may mean a person whose sense of smell does not function or “something resembling some filth” (Dr. Minawi). Steingass suggests for *khasham* “offensive smell of the nose from polypus, ozena.”

If a person just uses stones in cleansing himself (after passing urine or a bowel movement),³¹⁸ they consider this act itself a great sin! All of this is from the meanness of their character and a proof of their internal impurity. It is a religious obligation to purify oneself of this meanness, for all such things are causes for destruction, while refraining from the precautions is not a cause for destruction.

THE FIFTH CONDITION is to observe those very precautions in eating, dressing, and speaking which are more important. When one refrains from that which is more important, it is a proof that one is cautious out of self-adornment or out of habit; just as the person who eats something unclean when hunger does not compel him and then will not perform the obligatory prayers until he has washed his hands and mouth. He does not know this much, that the eating of whatever is unclean is forbidden! If it is unclean, why does he eat it unnecessarily? If it is not unclean, why does he wash his hands? Why does he pray on a cloth upon which illiterates may have sat? Why does he eat the food prepared in the homes of the common folk? Precaution about the purity of the morsel is more important, yet most of these people eat food prepared in the homes of merchants and Turks and perform their prayers on their cloths. This is not the sign of candor in this matter.

THE SIXTH CONDITION is that these precautions not be executed with forbidden or abominable things, such as in exceeding the three times in performing one's purification; the fourth time is prohibited in order that the process not be prolonged while Muslims are waiting for him, for this is not fitting.³¹⁹ Nor (is it fitting) to use an excessive amount of water, or to delay a prayer after the beginning of its time, or to be the imam³²⁰ and keep the congregation waiting, or to promise a Muslim something and then delay in fulfilling it, or because it is the time for him to engage in business and (not doing so) will cause loss to his family—all such things are unlawful, because these precautions are not obligatory—or to spread a prayer rug on the floor of the mosque so that no one may touch his clothing.³²¹ In this (last) there are three abominations: first, he has occupied a part of the mosque of the Muslims, whereas he has a right to no more space than he needs for himself;

³¹⁸ Cleansing oneself with stones in the absence of water is permissible, but should be repeated with water whenever it is available.

³¹⁹ When performing the obligatory ablutions for prayer (*wuḍūʿ*), one washes the hands, mouth, face, etc. One washing is obligatory (*fard*), the usual Practice of the Prophet (*sunnah*) is three times. Ghazzali implies that washing in excess of this is ostentation and profligacy.

³²⁰ "*imām*": the leader of a congregational formal prayer.

³²¹ By spreading prayer rug, he creates a space about himself to prevent physical contact with others.

second, the prayer line may be interrupted, whereas the Practice of the Prophet is that the congregation stand shoulder to shoulder; and third, he avoids the Muslims the way he would avoid dogs or some other pollution. This is not fitting. There are many abominations that ignorant ascetics commit by way of precaution, but they do not know it.

EXCURSUS: THE KINDS OF EXTERNAL PURIFICATION

Not that thou hast learned that external purification is separate from internal purification, and that internal purification is of three kinds: first, the purification of the limbs of sins; second, the purification of the soul from bad characteristics; and third, the purification of the heart of all that there is save God; know that there are also three kinds of external purification:

THE FIRST KIND is the purification from unclean things. Know that all physical things that God Most High has created are clean except a drink that induces drunkenness—a little or a lot of it is a pollution. All animals are clean except the dog and the pig. All dead animals are unclean except for four: humans, fish, locusts, and everything in which blood does not flow such as flies, bees, scorpions, and worms which (accidentally) fall into food. Everything inside an animal that becomes transmuted or altered³²² is unclean, except that which engenders the animal, such as semen, the eggs of a fowl, and the silkworm. Everything that is not altered, such as sweat and tears, is clean.

Anything unclean invalidates formal prayers except five things for which there is leniency because of difficulties: first, an uncleanness which remains after cleaning oneself with three stones, on condition that it be restricted to its own place.³²³ Second, mud on a roadway—even if one definitely sees an impurity in it, but in an amount that one cannot prevent—is excused, unless one should fall into it, or an animal should kick up filth upon one's clothing—this is rare and not excused. Third, filth which reaches footgear, in an amount that it is not possible to avoid, is excused; if one is to perform formal prayer while wearing the footgear, then one rubs the footgear in the earth.³²⁴ Fourth, the blood of lice on thy clothing or the clothing of someone else that thou art wearing, whether a

³²² Everything that is altered, for example, by the digestive processes in the gut of an animal.

³²³ When water is unavailable to clean oneself after bowel movements and urinating, stones may be used. Since this is not as efficient a method, it may happen that some impurity may remain. After using three stones for this purpose, the requirements are fulfilled, but in the event an impurity has fallen upon another place, such as the leg or thigh, this must be removed before performing the formal prayers.

³²⁴ That is, to clean the footgear as much as is possible.

little or a lot, is excused, even if one has sweat on it. And fifth, blood which is secreted from small pimples or pustules, of which the human skin is not devoid, and in the same way, the light fluid that seeps out of such small sores, except in the case that they be large and of pus, resembling a boil, and (this) is rare. It must be washed away. If a trace of it remains after washing, we hope that it will be excused. However, if a person has been cupped or injured, the blood must be washed off. Then, if there is a trace of it (on his person) and some danger in its being washed, then he should (not pray at that time) and perform the make-up prayers (at some other time). This excuse is unusual.

EXCURSUS: [THE KINDS OF]³²⁵ CLEAN AND UNCLEAN WATER

If water passes over something unclean one time, except for the filth of a dog, it is clean,³²⁶ unless the impurity itself still remains. In that case, it must be washed until it disappears. If it has been washed and well-rubbed, but there still remains a stain or odor, (nonetheless) it is clean.

All water created by God is clean and cleansing,³²⁷ except in the case of four kinds of water: first, water which has been used one time to remove an impurity resulting from defilement³²⁸ is clean, but does not cleanse; second, that which has been used to remove some unclean filth is neither clean nor cleansing; third, that which is less than 250 *manns*³²⁹ in quantity, but into which some impurity has fallen, even if its appearance is not altered, is unclean according to the school of Shafi'i (R); however, if the amount of water exceeds 250 *manns*, so long as it is not altered in appearance by some impurity falling into it, it is clean; fourth, the water is clean in which some clean substance can be observed, such as saffron, soap, or alkali ashes, thereby changing its taste, smell, or

³²⁵ From the AA text.

³²⁶ It should be remembered that Ghazzali is discussing the cleanness and uncleanness of water from the point of view of its suitability for use in washing and bathing for prayer, reading the Quran, etc.; not from the point of view of modern ideas about sanitation or potability.

³²⁷ "clean and cleansing": clean water does not create a state of impurity. Cleansing water is clean and can be used to ablutions, etc.

³²⁸ "defilement" (*hadath*) means any act or event which causes one to lose the state of purity necessary for prayer, etc., such as urinating, bowel movements, or the emission of semen. The remedies for this are first washing. After the washing it would be necessary to perform an ablution, either the lesser (*wuḍūʿ*) or the greater (*ghusl*), depending upon the cause, in order to perform prayer, read the Quran, etc.

³²⁹ *mann*: various values are given for the weight of a *mann*. There are forty *ser*s in a *mann*. Because the weight of a *ser* varies in different countries and periods, it is difficult to give an exact calculation. Ghazzali's *mann*, depending upon the weight of the *ser*, was probably between 40 and 84 lbs. (Steingass)

color; but it is not cleansing. However, if the change is slight, then it is (also) cleansing.

THE SECOND KIND is the purification from causes of defilement. In this, there are five matters to be learned: the rules of conduct concerning elimination,³³⁰ cleansing after an easing of nature,³³¹ the lesser ablution,³³² the greater ablution and the dry ablution.³³³

THE MANNER OF ELIMINATION. One should be in a deserted place away from the eyes of others. If possible, it should be (done) behind a wall. The privates should not be uncovered prior to sitting. One should not face the sun or the moon. The direction of prayer should not be behind one, nor should one face the direction of prayer, unless there is a wall before him. In that case, it is lawful, but it is to be preferred to have the direction of prayer to one's left or right. One should not ease nature in a place where people assemble. One should not urinate standing in water and one should not defecate beneath a fruit-bearing tree. One should not defecate or urinate in any hole. One should not urinate against the wind or on hard earth to avoid being splattered. One should not urinate standing up except out of necessity. One should not urinate where people perform their ablutions or bathe. When sitting, one should incline to the left. When one enters the place of purification,³³⁴ one should lead with the left foot; when one comes out, one should lead with the right foot. (While there), one should not possess anything with the name of God written upon it. One should not go bareheaded to the toilet. When one enters, one should say: *I seek refuge with God from the noxious, impure filth of the sender of evil, the accursed Satan*; and when coming out, one should say: *Praise be to God Who has taken away from me that which troubles me and leaves with me that which benefits me.*

THE MANNER OF CLEANSING ONESELF. One must have at hand three stones or clods of earth before elimination. When one finishes, one should take one in the left hand and place it on a place (of the body) where there are no excreta and then move it to the place of impurity. One should rub it in around in such a way in order to remove the excreta and not spread it. If, after the use of three stones, the area is not clean, one should use two more, so that it will be an odd number. Then, one should take a larger stone with the right hand and the penis with the left hand and touch the stone with the penis three times, or touch the penis on a

³³⁰ "elimination" (*qaḍā-yi ḥājat*) here means "the elimination of bodily wastes."

³³¹ "cleansing after an easing of nature": *istinjā*.

³³² "lesser ablution": *wuḍū*.

³³³ "dry ablution": *tayammum*.

³³⁴ "the place of purification" (*ṭahārat-jāy*): a euphemism for toilet.

wall in three places. One should use the left hand to move it, not the right hand. If one is content with that, it is enough. However, it is to be preferred that one combine the stones and water.

If one is to use water, one should rise from that place and go to another place so that the water does not drip on it. One should pour water with the right hand and rub with the left hand until one knows from the palm of the hand that nothing remains. Knowing that it is now clean, one should not use a lot of water or (use it) forcefully so that the water may go inside. Rather, when performing the cleansing, one should allow oneself to relax. Whatever is not reached by the water with this much is from inside and the rule of impurity does not apply to that lest one give way to anxiety (about this).

The same is true of the cleansing (of the penis) after urination. One should bring the hand down under the penis three times and shake it three times, walk back three steps, and cough three times. One should not trouble oneself more than this, lest anxiety assail one. If one has performed this (cleansing), whenever one supposes that some wetness has appeared after cleansing oneself after elimination, one should throw some water on one's underdrawers and say to himself that that wetness was from water; the Messenger (S) commanded this because of anxious promptings.

When completing the cleansing after elimination, one should wipe the hands on a wall or the ground. Then one should wash them until no odor remains. At the time of cleansing after elimination, one should say: *O God, purify my heart of hypocrisy and protect my privates from vile deeds.*

THE MANNER OF THE LESSER ABLUTION. After completing the cleansing, one should use a toothbrush.³³⁵ One should start from the right and above, then (brush) to the left and below. Then (one should brush) the inside surfaces of the teeth in the same order. After that, one should also brush the tongue and the palate. One should know that using a toothbrush is important. In the Traditions, it is said: "One formal prayer having used a toothbrush is the equal of seventy prayers without having used one." One should state an Intention when brushing: "I clean the guardians³³⁶ of the remembrance of God."

Just as after elimination one does not omit performing the lesser ablution, which was the Practice of the Messenger (S), one should never perform the lesser ablution without using a toothbrush. If one is not performing the lesser ablution, but knows that there has been some change in one's mouth—for reason of sleep, or keeping the mouth closed

³³⁵ "toothbrush": The Arabic (and Persian) is *miswāk*, a kind of toothbrush made from the twig of certain trees.

³³⁶ That is, the teeth, as they are involved in the articulation of the remembrance of God.

for a long time, or eating something with a strong odor—it is the Practice of the Prophet to brush one's teeth.

When finished with that, one sits upon an elevated place facing the direction of prayer and says: *In the name of God the, the Merciful, the Compassionate, I see refuge with Thee from the goadings of the devils and I seek refuge with Thee, my Lord, from their being present (with me).* (Q. 23:97-98) Then, one should wash one's hands three times and say: *O God, I beseech Thee for prosperity and blessing, and I seek refuge with Thee from misfortune and destruction.* Then, one recites the intention for the lawfulness³³⁷ of formal prayer, or the intention for the removal of impurity, delaying the declaration of intention until the time of washing the mouth three times. Then one throws water into the mouth, unless one is fasting, and one says: *O God, help me to remember Thee and thank Thee and to read Thy Book.* Then one sniffs water into the nostrils three times and says: *O God, let me smell the perfume of the Garden and be satisfied with me.*

Next, one washes one's face three times and says: *O God, brighten my face with Thy light on the day Thou shalt brighten the faces of Thy saints.* Water should touch every hair that is on it to its root, except the hairs of a beard and mustache³³⁸ that are very thick and dense. One should pass water over the beard and mustache and run the (wet) fingers through the hair. This is called "combing." Whatever is on the sides of the face from the top of the ear to the temples is the limit of the face. One should insert the finger into the corner of the eyes to remove whatever is in the corner of the eye of collyrium³³⁹ and the like.

After that, one washes the right arm three times up to the middle of the upper arm—as close as possible to under the upper arm is preferred—and says: *O God, give me my book (of deeds) in my right hand and make my reckoning easy.* Then one does the same with the left hand and moves rings so that water goes under them, and says: *O God, truly I see refuge with Thee (against) Thy giving me my book in my left hand or from behind my back.*

Then one wets both hands and places the spread fingertips together and brings them over the head from the front of the scalp to the nape of the neck, then back again to the starting point so that both surfaces of the hair are moistened; this is once. One does this three times so that all of the head is wiped, and says: *O God, cover me with The mercy and send down of Thy blessings upon me and shade me beneath Thy Throne on the day when nothing will shade me save Thy shadow.* Then one wipes the ears thrice, inserting the fingers into the cavities of

³³⁷ "lawfulness" (*istibāḥat*): literally, deeming something permissible.

³³⁸ "beard and mustache": *mahāsin* (good things), so called because they adorn the male face.

³³⁹ "collyrium": *kuhl*.

the ears and bringing the thumbs down behind the ears, and says: *O God, make me one of those who listen to the Word and follow the best of it.* Then one wipes the all of the neck and says: *O God, free my neck from the fire and I seek refuge with Thee from the chains and fetters.*

Then one washes the right foot three times to the middle of the calf and runs the fingers with the little finger of the left hand under (the foot), beginning with the little toes of the right foot and ending with the little toe of the left foot, and says *O God, make my feet firm on the Bridge on the day when feet slip from it.* One washes the left foot in the same way and says: *O God, I seek refuge with Thee lest my foot slip on the Bridge on the day the feet of the hypocrites will slip.*

After completing (these things), one says: *I testify that there is no god but God, the One; He has no partner; and I testify that Muhammad is His Servant and His Messenger. O God, make me one of the repenters and make me one of the purified and made me one of Thy righteous servants.*

One who does not know Arabic should be instructed in the meaning of these words, so that he may know what he is saying. In the Traditions, it is related that when anyone in a state of purity remembers God Most High, all of his parts become purified from the sins and the errors he has committed. If he does not mention God, nothing is purified except that which was touched by water.

One should perform the ablutions before each formal prayer, even if nothing has occurred to cause one to lose the state of purity, for it is related in the Traditions: "Whoever renews his purity, God Most High renews his faith for him." When one has purified oneself correctly, one must know that one has cleansed that which is seen by the people, but that which God Most High sees is the soul. When one has not cleansed it with the repentance of disagreeable traits, one is like the person who will host the king and cleans the outer door but leaves dirty the court and the dais where the king will sit.

EXCURSUS: SIX THINGS DISLIKED IN THE LESSER ABLUTION

Know that in the lesser ablution six things are disliked: talking, striking the face with the hands,³⁴⁰ shaking the wet hands (so that water scatters from them), performing the ablution with water which has been warmed in a water pot, wasting water, and performing the acts more than three times each.

However, drying the face with the intention to prevent dirt from settling on it or not doing that so that more of the traces of worship

³⁴⁰ In the corresponding Arabic passage in *The Revival*, Ghazzali says: "and striking the face a striking with water"; that is, splashing the face with water rather than washing it carefully.

remain upon it have both been reported and both are permissible when that is the intention, and both have merit. It is preferred that one use an earthen vessel when purifying oneself, for it is more humble than a (metallic) ewer or bowl.

THE MANNER OF THE GREATER ABLUTION. Whoever has sexual intercourse or a discharge of semen, either asleep or awake, must perform the greater ablution. It is one's obligation to wash the entire body and that the water reach the roots of the hair, and that one declare the intention to remove the state of impurity.³⁴¹

The Practice of the Prophet is that one first utters: *In the name of God*. Then, one washes the hands thrice after which one washes clean all impurities from the body. Next, one performs the lesser ablution as described above, with all of the Practices of the Prophet—one should delay in washing the feet until the last when one is leaving the bath.³⁴² So, one should throw water³⁴³ on the right side (of the body) three times and on the left side three times. One should rub every place the hands can reach. One should try to wash any spots of the body that are (pressed) together,³⁴⁴ as this is a religious obligation. One should refrain from handling the genitalia.

THE MANNER OF THE DRY ABLUTION. Know that whoever cannot obtain water, or does not have a sufficient quantity for himself and his comrades to drink, or the way to the water is obstructed by a wild beast, or there is a person there that one fears, or—if the water is someone else's property—that person will not sell it except at an exorbitant price, or one has a wound which water might affect and endanger one's life or prolong illness; (such a person) must wait until the time of the obligatory prayer, then look for a place where the earth is clean. Then, he strikes the earth with his two hands so that the dust rises and with his fingers together. Then he recites the intention of

³⁴¹ "state of impurity": *janābat*.

³⁴² Ghazzali mentions this because washing the feet is the last part of the lesser ablution; however, in the greater ablution washing the body completely intervenes before the washing of the feet. It is assumed that the person bathing is in a standing position. See following Note.

³⁴³ It should be noted that Ghazzali is not describing a bath using tub or shower. The water is dipped out of some container and thrown over the body, a practice of bathing still prevalent in many parts of the world. In doing this, naturally the feet would be the last parts of the body to be washed before putting on clogs or footwear and leaving the bathing place.

³⁴⁴ That is, places where parts of the body fold over each other, such as behind the ears, the armpits, the groin, behind the knees, between the toes, etc. Every external surface of the body should be washed.

permission.³⁴⁵ Then, he wipes all of his face with both hands, not taking pains lest the dust enter into the hair.

Then, he removes his rings and strikes the earth again with his hands, fingers spread apart. Then, he places the back of the fingers of his right hand on the bottom of the fingers of his left hand. Then, he puts the fingers of his left hand on his right forearm. Then, he rubs the palm of the left hand on the left forearm. Then, he rubs the left thumb over the right thumb. Then, he does the same to the left hand with the right hand. Then, he rubs both palms together. Then, he rubs the fingers between each other. If this is done in one stroke, it is sufficient. If one cannot do this, it is permissible to do more so that the dust may reach all parts of the hand. With such a dry ablution, one may perform the obligatory prayer and as many voluntary prayers as one wishes. However, to perform another obligatory prayer, one must perform another dry ablution.

THE THIRD KIND is the purification from bodily dirt. This is of two types:

THE FIRST TYPE is dirt such as that which is found among the hairs of the head, beard, or mustache. It must be gotten rid of with a comb, water, and the clay of the bathhouse.³⁴⁶ The Messenger (S) never parted with his comb, either on a journey or at home. It is a Practice of the Prophet to keep oneself clean of such dirt. Another is the dirt that accumulates in the corner of the eye. One should remove it when performing the lesser ablution. Another is in the ear. When one emerges from the bath one should take care of this. Also, there is that which is in the nose and the plaque on the teeth. They can be removed by brushing with a toothbrush, rinsing, and sniffing. Too, that which accumulates on the knuckles or the back of the foot and heel and that which is under the nails, or any other dirt on the body (should be removed). Getting rid of all such things is the Practice of the Prophet.

Know that if such dirt remains, purification is not nullified; the dirt does not impede the water from the skin, except if there is a lot under the fingernails, an abnormal amount. In that case, it is an impediment. Cleansing oneself from such dirt with hot water and clay in the bath is a Practice of the Prophet.

³⁴⁵ "permission": *istibāḥat*: see Note 337 above.

³⁴⁶ This clay, *gil-i garmābah*, is a special preparation of clay used for washing in bathhouses.

EXCURSUS: CONDUCT IN THE BATHHOUSE

Whoever enters a bathhouse four things are obligatory,³⁴⁷ and there are ten Practices of the Prophet:

TWO OF THE OBLIGATIONS concern the private parts: (1) One should cover the (male) body from the navel to the knee from the sight (of others). (2) One should watch the hand of the servant, for handling is a greater impropriety³⁴⁸ than seeing. And two concern the private parts of others: (3) One should refrain from looking at the private parts of others. If someone uncovers his privates, one should caution him. There is no fear, for, if one does not, one is in rebellion (against God), and whoever does not do this leaves the bath in a state of rebellion. A story about this is told of 'Umar (R): One day he was sitting in the bath. He was facing the wall with something bound about his eyes.³⁴⁹ This is also incumbent upon women. (4) Eating bread in the bathhouse is prohibited, except for some manifest reason.

AS FOR THE PRACTICES OF THE PROPHET, they are: (1) reciting an intention that "I do this so that I will be adorned for prayer, not for the eyes of people." (2) One should pay the bathhousekeeper in advance so that he may be pleased with one's pouring out of water and know what he is being given. (3) Then, one should enter with the left foot and one should say upon entering: *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; I seek refuge with God from the noxious, impure filth of the sender of evil, the accursed Satan.* This is because the bath is the place of Satan. (4) Then, one should endeavor to go at a time when the bathhouse is empty or at a time when it is relatively empty. (5) One should not enter the caldarium³⁵⁰ hurriedly to sweat a lot. (6) Upon entering, one should wash both hands immediately. One should not waste water; one should use a quantity that will not displease the bathhousekeeper. (7) Upon entering, one should not greet with "Peace" (*salām*), but if some one grasps thy hand,³⁵¹ one should not be concerned. If some one greets him, he should reply: *May God safeguard thee*, but should not speak much. (8) If one recites the Quran, one should do so softly and not raise one's voice. But if one utters the "seeking refuge",³⁵² it may be done in a loud voice. (9) One should not enter the bathhouse at the time of the sunset obligatory formal prayer and when the sun is going down. One should not go to the bathhouse between the time of the sunset obligatory formal prayer and the obligatory formal

³⁴⁷ "obligatory": *wājib*.

³⁴⁸ "a greater impropriety" (*farā-tar*): literally, "higher, farther up"

³⁴⁹ So as not to see the privates of others.

³⁵⁰ caldarium (*khānah-yi garm*): The hot or steam room of a bathhouse.

³⁵¹ That is, shakes your hand or grasps them in both hands as a sign of friendship.

³⁵² "seeking refuge" (*isti'ādhat*): that is, *I seek refuge with God from the accursed Satan.*

prayer before going to sleep, for that is the time of the circulating of Satan. (10) When entering the caldarium, remember the fires of hell. One should remain there an hour or more to know what the prison of hell will be like.

Indeed, if one is intelligent, when looking at anything, one remembers the Hereafter. When one sees darkness, one sees the gloom of the grave. When one sees a snake, one remembers the snakes of hell. When one sees something dreadful, one remembers Munkar and Nakir³⁵³ and the guardians of hell. When one hears a harsh sound, one remembers the blast of the Trumpet (announcing the Day of Judgment). When one sees rejection and acceptance in some business, one is reminded of the rejection and acceptance of the Hereafter. These are the lawful Practices of the Prophet.

From the medical point of view, it is said that employing lime once a month is beneficial. When one is about to leave, throwing cold water on the feet prevents gout and headaches. One should not pour cold water on the head. When leaving the bathhouse in summer, one should sleep; that is better for one than a medicinal draught.

THE SECOND TYPE is of a different kind. It is the cleanliness from the refuse of the body. There are seven of these:

First: The hair on the head. Shaving (the head) is preferred and cleaner, except for nobles.³⁵⁴ However, partial shaving and leaving hair in different places, as is the custom of soldiers, is disliked and has been interdicted.

Second: Keeping the mustache level with the (line of the upper) lip is a Practice of the Prophet. Letting it lengthen to below that line is interdicted.

Third: Plucking out of the hair in the armpits every forty days is a Practice of the Prophet. If one becomes accustomed to this in the beginning, it is easy; if one is not accustomed to this, shaving is preferred so as not to give oneself trouble.

Fourth: It is a Practice of the Prophet to remove the pubic hair with lime or by shaving. This should be done at least once every forty days.

Fifth: It is cutting the nails so that dirt does not accumulate under them. However, if there is dirt under them, purification is not invalidated, since the Messenger (S), having seen such dirt on the hands of some

³⁵³ Munkar and Nakir: the two angels (their names mean "Unknown" and "Repudiating") who visit the dead in their graves and interrogate them about their belief in the Prophet and Islam.

³⁵⁴ This is a sanitary recommendation. The "nobles," being more affluent, presumably had access to better sanitary facilities.

people, ordered them to cut their nails, but not to make up their prayers. In the traditions, it is recorded that when the nails become long, they become the residence of the devil. One should begin with the superior nails, and the hand is superior to the foot, and from the right to the left. The finger that is extended (when reciting) the "Testimony" is superior to the others. That is the index finger of the right hand, so it is to be preferred to begin with that one. Then from the right side until the left side is reached. Place the hands upon each other so that they form a circle and then begin with the index finger of the right hand. One proceeds to the right little finger; then start with the little finger of the left hand and finish with the thumb of the right hand.

Sixth: It is cutting back the umbilical cord, and that is done at the time of birth.

Seventh: It is the circumcision of males and females.

EXCURSUS: THE ETIQUETTE OF THE BEARD AND MUSTACHE

It is customary to let male facial hair grow to the length of a fist and then cut it so that it does not become excessive. Ibn 'Umar³⁵⁵ (R) and a party of the Followers³⁵⁶ did thus. Another party said that it should be left longer. Know that ten things are disliked concerning the facial hair:

First: Dyeing the hair black. In the Traditions, it is related that this is the dyeing of the inhabitants of hell and the dyeing of the unbelievers. The first person to do this was Pharaoh. Ibn 'Abbas (R)³⁵⁷ relates that the Messenger (S) said: "During the Last Days there will be a people who blacken their hair; they shall not smell the perfume of heaven." And also in the Traditions it is related: "The worst of the elderly are those who make themselves like the young, and the best of the young are those who make themselves like the elders." The reason for this prohibition is that it is a disguise with corrupt motives.

Second: Dyeing the hair red or yellow. However, it is (acceptable to) the Practice of the Prophet (as a stratagem) if warriors fighting for Islam do this so that the unfaithful will not be spurred to fight hard and look upon them as weak and old.

Third: Whitening the facial hair with sulfur so that others will think one is old and give him more respect. This is foolishness, for

³⁵⁵ Ibn 'Umar: 'Abdullah bin 'Umar bin al-Khattab, Abu 'Abd al-Rahman, the popular son of the second of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, 'Umar bin al-Khattab (see Note 299). He was noted for his generosity and died at Makkah AH73/692CE at the age of 84.

³⁵⁶ "the Followers" (*tābi'iyān*): the generation that followed after the generation of the Companions, who were contemporaries of the Prophet (S).

³⁵⁷ Ibn 'Abbas: 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas bin 'Abd al-Muttalib, one of the most important of the Companions. He studied with 'Ali bin Abi Talib and was expelled from Makkah by 'Abdullah bin Zubayr. He repaired to Ta'if where he died in AH68/687-8CE.

respect comes with knowledge and intelligence, not with age or youth. Anas Malik (R)³⁵⁸ says that when the Messenger of God (S) received the command and departed,³⁵⁹ there were not twenty white hairs in all of his hair.

Fourth: Removing (by cutting or plucking) white hairs from the facial hair and being ashamed of old age. This is as though one were ashamed of the light that God Most High gave him. This is ignorance.

Fifth: Plucking the hair at the onset of youth out of fancy or pride so that the face may appear hairless. This is ignorance, for God Most High has angels whose recited praying³⁶⁰ is this which they say: *Praise be to Him who has adorned men with beards and women with tresses.*

Sixth: Dressing the facial hair with the fingernails like a pigeon's tail so that it may appear better to women and so they like him more.

Seven: Letting the hair on the head grow long with locks that fall below the earlobes, more than is approved by the righteous.

Eighth: Admiring the blackness or whiteness of one's hair, for God Most High does not like those who are conceited.

Ninth: Combing one's hair for people to see, not for observing the Practice of the Prophet.

Tenth: Leaving it in disarray in order to pretend to asceticism so that people may suppose that he does not take the trouble to comb his own hair himself.

Let this suffice concerning the rules of the purification of the body.

³⁵⁸ Anas Malik: Anas bin Malik, Abu Hamzah al-Ansari. The "al-Ansari" indicates that he was one of the Helpers from Madinah who gave aid to the Muslims fleeing Makkah in Hijrah. He was the Prophet's servant, a soldier, and an important source of Traditions. He died at Basrah in AH93/711CE.

³⁵⁹ That is, he died.

³⁶⁰ "recited praying": *tasbiḥ*.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCERNING FORMAL PRAYER

Know that (obligatory) formal prayer is a pillar of Islam and the foundation of religion. It is the forerunner and master of all acts of worship. A compact is made by whoever performs these five obligations according to their conditions and at their (proper) times with God Most High that he will be in His security and protection. If he has abstained from committing any major sins, all of his other sins will be erased. The five prayers are the atonement for all of them. The Messenger (S) said: "The similitude of these five obligatory prayers is a clear channel of water which flows by the door of a person's house. Everyday he washes himself five times in that water. Is it possible that dirt would remain on him?" They said: "No, O Messenger of God." He said: "These five prayers carry away sins the way the water carries away dirt."

The Messenger (S) also said: "Formal prayer is a pillar of religion. Whoever refrains from it has destroyed his own religion." They asked (the Messenger): "What is the best of deeds?" He replied: "Performing one's (obligatory) formal prayers at their (proper) times." And he said: "The key to heaven is formal prayer." And he said: "God Most High has not imposed upon His servant anything—except His Unity—more pleasing to Him than (obligatory) prayer. If there were anything more pleasing than this, the angels would have occupied themselves with it as they do with prayer. One group is bowing, another group is prostrating, another group is standing, and another group is sitting."³⁶¹ And he said: "Whoever deliberately omits one obligatory formal prayer is an unbeliever." That is, it is close to being a fault in his belief itself, as they say: "Whoever has lost his water in the desert has lost his life." That is, he has reached (a place) close to (his) destruction and has fallen into (mortal) danger. And he said: "The first thing that is examined on the Day of Resurrection is (a person's record of) formal prayer. If it is complete and according to rule, it is accepted; then according to that his other deeds are accepted as they are; but if (the record of formal prayer) is deficient, then he is driven away despite all of his other works.

And the Messenger (S) said: "The formal prayer of whoever purifies himself well and performs them at the proper times, and bows and prostrates himself properly, and whose soul is humble and modest, goes to the Throne white and shining and says: 'May God Most High watch over thee as thou hast watched over me.' And the formal prayers of whoever does not perform his obligatory formal prayers at the correct time, is lax in his purification, and careless in his bowing and prostrating,

³⁶¹ That is, the angels are in the principle physical postures of the formal prayer.

and does not perform them in submission and humility, goes to heaven black and dark and says: 'May God Most High make thee wasted, just as thou hast wasted me,' so that God Most High wills that his formal prayer be wrapped about him like a ragged garment and that he be driven out." And the Messenger (S) also said: "The worst of thieves is he who steals a formal prayer."

THE MANNER OF THE OUTWARD ASPECT OF FORMAL PRAYER³⁶²

Know that the outward aspect of prayer is like (its physical) body. It has a true nature and a secret that is the spirit (*rūh*) of formal prayer. We shall first expound the external aspect of formal prayer.

The first is that after the purification of the body and clothing and the covering of the privates, one stands on a clean place facing the direction of prayer. The feet should be placed the distance of four fingers apart.³⁶³ The back should be straight and the head inclined forward. The eyes should be fixed on a spot not further away than the place of prostration.³⁶⁴

When standing erect, one should recite: *Say, I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind.* (Q. 114:1)³⁶⁵ One should concentrate one's thoughts on keeping the devil away from oneself.

THE CALL TO ASSEMBLE FOR PRAYER, THE CALL TO ASSEMBLE IN RANKS FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF OBLIGATORY PRAYER, AND THE DECLARATION OF THE INTENTION. Then, if there is someone who is possible for one to follow,³⁶⁶ the call to assemble³⁶⁷ is proclaimed loudly. If not, then one limits oneself to the call to assemble in ranks.³⁶⁸ The Intention³⁶⁹ is recited in one's heart. One says to the heart, for example: 'I perform the obligatory noon formal prayer for God Most High.'

³⁶² Although the following exposition of the procedure for the service of formal prayer applies to what is broadly correct for all Muslims, there are differences among the various schools of religious jurisprudence in the details. There are also some differences between men and women in the manner of performing the formal prayers.

³⁶³ That is, the width of four fingers of the hand; the feet should be placed from about three and one-half to four and one-half inches apart.

³⁶⁴ That is, where the face or forehead touches the ground or prayer rug during prostration.

³⁶⁵ That is, one should recite the entire last surah of the Quran that begins thus: *I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the whisperer [the devil], who whispers in the hearts of mankind, of jinn and mankind.* (Q. 114:1-6)

³⁶⁶ That is, if there is someone possessing the necessary qualifications to lead the prayer.

³⁶⁷ "call to assemble": *adhān*.

³⁶⁸ "call to assemble in ranks": *iqāmah*.

³⁶⁹ "the Intention": *niyat*.

THE MAGNIFICATION:³⁷⁰ When the meaning of those words has become present in the heart, one lifts one's hands to a point near the ears, so that the fingertips are level with the tops of the ears, the thumbs are level with the earlobes, and the palms in line (vertically) with his shoulders. When one has assumed this stance, one says: *God is Greater*.³⁷¹ Then, one places one's hands, one upon the other, above one's navel and below one's chest. The right hand is on top of the left hand. The finger of Testimony³⁷² and the middle finger are extended over the left forearm, while the other fingers are circles around the forearm. The hands should not drop down (to the sides after pronouncing the Magnification) and then be brought back towards the chest; rather, they should be placed on the chest (directly from the position by the ears), for that is more correct. Between the two positions, one should not move the hands about, neither forward nor to the sides.

One should not exaggerate in pronouncing the Magnification, so that the *u* after *Allāh* is noticeable or the *a* after the *b* in *akbar* sounds like broad *ā*.³⁷³ Such things are the work of those influenced by devilish insinuations and the ignorant. Pronounce these words during formal prayer in the same way that thou wouldst pronounce them when speaking ordinarily outside of prayer, without ostentation and exaggeration.

THE RECITATION: When the hands are placed upon each other, one should say: *God is greater (than all) in greatness; praise be to God in plenitude; praise God in the morning and the evening*. Then one recites: *I have turned my face towards...*³⁷⁴ Then one says: *Praise be to Thee, O God, and with Thy praise and may The name be blessed and Thy majesty exalted; there is no god other than Thee*; so that all schools (of religious jurisprudence) and all narratives (of Traditions) may be brought to together.³⁷⁵ Then one says: *I seek refuge with God from the accursed*

³⁷⁰ "Magnification": *Takbīr*. The meaning is "God is Greater than all else."

³⁷¹ "*God is Greater*": *Allāhu Akbar*.

³⁷² "the finger of Testimony" (*angusht-i shahādat*): the right forefinger.

³⁷³ That is, so that the second *a* in *akbar* sounds like the *ā* in 'father,' rather than having the correct short vowel which is more like the *a* in 'back.'

³⁷⁴ *Wajjahtu wajhi*. Ghazzali's intention here is that one should recite the entire verse beginning with those words. It is: *Lo! I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, as one by nature upright, and I am not of the polytheists*. (Q. 6:79). The verse actually commences this way: *Innī wajjahtu wajhi...* It is recited when the one is standing in position for the performance of the formal prayer after the call to assemble (*iqāmah*) is completed, and immediately before the declaration of the Intention. The Intention ends with a Magnification (*takbīr* = *allāhu akbar*) at which the hands are raised to the level of the ears, as Ghazzali has already described above in the section on the Magnification.

³⁷⁵ That is, to harmonize all schools of religious law and various (sometimes conflicting) Traditions.

Satan; verily God is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing and In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

THE PRAISE AND THE CHAPTER: After this one recites "The Praise,"³⁷⁶ observing the prolongations of vowels and the doubled consonants.³⁷⁷ One should not exaggerate in articulating the letters so that they become confused. Observe the difference between (the letters) *Ḍād* and *Zā*; however, if one cannot, it is acceptable.³⁷⁸ When completing the recitation (of this chapter), one should say 'Amen' (*āmīn*), not as though it is the last word of the chapter, but a little separate from it. Then another chapter is recited or whatever one wishes of the Quran. In the first two bows of the dawn, sunset, and evening prayers, they are to be recited aloud, except when one is following an imam.³⁷⁹

THE BOW: After pronouncing a Magnification, one bows,³⁸⁰ but not immediately upon finishing the recitation of the Quranic verses. One raises one's hands during this Magnification as before. One prolongs the Magnification until one reaches the end of the bow and then one's hands are placed on the knees. The fingers, spread apart, are in line with the direction of prayer. The hands are not removed from the knees; rather, one keeps them straight. One's back and head are straight, like a plank, so that one's entire figure is like the letter *Lām*.³⁸¹ The elbows extend

³⁷⁶ The Praise (*al-Ḥamd*): Familiar quotations from the Holy Quran are often referred to by their first prominent word or phrase. In this case, "the praise" is the first word of the second verse of the first chapter of the Quran, more often referred to these days as "The Opening" (*al-Fātiḥah*). When performing the formal prayers, one first recites this chapter and then follows it with another chapter or some verses from another chapter of the Quran. At a minimum, any Muslim who performs the five daily prayers recites this chapter of seven verses 17 times a day.

³⁷⁷ Persian pronunciation, like English, normally does not double consonants (we say "little," not "lit-tle"). In borrowed words from languages where doubled-consonants often have meaning differences—and Arabic is one such language, Persian speakers ignore them in ordinary conversation but often pronounce them in careful, formal speech. In Arabic, for example *dabara* means "he turned his back; it elapsed," but *dabbara* means "he planned, made arrangements, managed, etc." Not pronouncing the doubled *b* would drastically alter the meaning.

³⁷⁸ Ghazzali is referring to two of the so-called "Arabic letters" which have no equivalent in Persian pronunciation or most other languages. Indeed, Arabic is called the "language of *Ḍād*," supposedly because no other language in the world possesses such a sound.

³⁷⁹ When an imam is leading the prayer, only his voice is heard in these recitations.

³⁸⁰ The act of bowing is called *rukūʿ*. Each bow is called a *rakʿat*. Formal prayers are, in part, identified by the number of bows they contain.

³⁸¹ "the letter *lām*": the letter *L*. The similitude is apposite in English as well, because the *L* has a similar shape in both scripts: that is, a longer vertical and shorter horizontal stroke at the base of the vertical. The Arabic *lām* faces to the left, while the Latin *L* faces to the right. The Arabic has a greater or smaller curve at the junction, but the Latin *L* usually has a right angle.

beyond one's sides and the upper arms do not touch the sides. However, a woman keeps her upper arms against her sides.³⁸² While remaining in this position, one says three times: *Glory be to my Lord, the Mighty, and with His praise*. If there is no imam, it is better that one say this seven or ten times

Then one straightens up from the bow and—without folding the hands—one says: *God listens to those who praise Him*. Then one rests while standing and says: *Our Lord! All praise is Thine in the fullness of the heavens and in the fullness of the earth and in the fullness of all other things that Thou may wish*.

In the second bow of the dawn prayer, it is a requirement to recite the "Declaration of Obedience to the Will of God."³⁸³

THE PROSTRATION: Then, one pronounces a Magnification and prostrates oneself,³⁸⁴ so that everything touches the earth to make one as near to it as possible: first the knees, then the hands, then the forehead and the nose. The hands are placed on the ground in line with the ears, the fingers together. The forearms lie on the ground, but there is a space between the upper arms and the sides, and (between) the belly and the thighs. Women bring these parts together.

Then, one says three times: *Glory be to my Lord, the Highest, and with His praise*. If one is not following an imam, it is better to increase the number. Then, one pronounces the Magnification and rises from the prostration and sits back on one's left leg, placing the hands on the thighs, and says: *Lord! Forgive me and have mercy upon me; provide for me and guide me; reward me, protect me, and excuse me*. Then, one performs another prostration. After that, one sits back, but lightly, and pronounces the Magnification. Then, one stands and performs the next

³⁸² One of the few occasions when Ghazzali points out different rules for the two sexes. It may be pointed out that in the Medieval world few women anywhere were able to read. Books were normally written with the male reader in mind. (Not many males could read either, although in the Islamic world, the literacy rate of both sexes was considerably higher than in the West of that era because of the great emphasis Islam placed upon learning to read the Quran.)

³⁸³ According to Shafi'i and others. Abu Hanifah did not require this. There are different forms of this (the *Qunūt*) prayer. The most common version is: *O God, guide me among those whom Thou hast guided, and preserve me among those whom Thou has preserved, and befriend me among those whom Thou hast befriended, and bless me in what Thou hast granted and save me from the evil of what Thou hast ordered, for Thou dost order and no order is given contrary to Thine order. Surely, he is not disgraced whom Thou befriendest, blessed art Thou, our Lord, and highly exalted!*

³⁸⁴ The act of prostration is called *sujūd*. Each individual prostration is a *sajdah*.

bow in the manner of the first, saying: *I seek refuge with God* before reciting the Praise.³⁸⁵

THE TESTIMONY OF FAITH: Now, when one has finished the second bow, one sits for the Testimony—sitting upon the left leg, as between the two prostrations with the hands on the thighs, but here the fingers of the right hand are curled, except the finger of Testimony³⁸⁶ which is omitted.³⁸⁷ At the time of reciting the Testimony, it is extended at the point when one says *illāllāh* (*except God*), not when one says *lā ilāha* (*There is no god*). It is permissible for the thumb to be omitted also. The second Testimony is performed in the same manner, however both legs are out from under to the right. The left buttock is on the ground.³⁸⁸

In the first Testimony, one rises after saying: *O God, bless Muhammad and the people of Muhammad*, but in the second Testimony, one continues to the end of the well-known prayer.³⁸⁹ Then one says: *Peace be upon you and the mercy of God*, turning the head to the right so that someone looking from behind him sees his face in profile. Then one pronounces the second “Peace” to the left in the same way. With these two greetings, he makes his Intention of leaving the prayer and the Intention of the greeting those present and the angels.³⁹⁰

EXCURSUS: SOME DISAGREEABLE ACTIONS DURING FORMAL PRAYER: Beginning a prayer when one is hungry, thirsty, angry, feels the need to urinate or defecate, or with any mental preoccupation which prevents humility; extending the legs close together; raising one leg; sitting on the ankles during the prostration; sitting on both buttocks; bringing the knees to the chest; inserting the hands inside clothing; holding clothing when prostrating; tightening the underdrawers, releasing the hands; looking from side to side; cracking the knuckles; scratching

³⁸⁵ “the Praise”: that is, the first chapter of the Quran, more formally called “The Opening” (*al-Fātiḥah*). The recitation of the Opening precedes the recitation from another part of the Quran in the standing that precedes each bow of the formal prayer.

³⁸⁶ See Note 372 above.

³⁸⁷ That is, not curled.

³⁸⁸ The right buttock is on the left leg.

³⁸⁹ That is, *O God, bless Muhammad and the people of Muhammad as Thou didst bless Abraham and the people of Abraham; surely Thou art Praised, Majestic. O God, give blessings to Muhammad and the people of Muhammad as Thou didst give blessings to Abraham and the people of Abraham; surely Thou art Praised, Majestic.*

³⁹⁰ This greeting is addressed to “you” (plural), even though one is alone, or only one other person is present. This is because the appointed angels are always present and they share in this greeting. This is also the reason for the common use of the plural in this greeting when meeting or taking leave from someone; that is, even if only one person is being greeted, the greeting is usually in the plural to include the angels. It may also be pointed out that Arabic has three numbers: singular, dual, and plural.

the body; yawning; playing with the hair of the mustache or beard; smoothing the ground just before prostration; blowing on the ground at the time of prostration; interlocking the fingers; and leaning back against something.

In summary, the eyes, hands, and all body parts must be according to the rules of etiquette and the nature of formal prayer in order for the prayer to be fulfilled and fit to be a provision for the Hereafter.

However, of all that has been said above, the religious obligations are no more than twelve things: the first Magnification, the standing, the recitation of "The Opening," the bow and the resting during it, the standing erect from the bow, the prostration and the resting during it, the raising of the body from the prostration, the sitting for the last Testimony, the blessing upon the Messenger, the sitting during that, and the salutation.

Doing this much makes a valid prayer, with the meaning that the sword will spare him;³⁹¹ however, the acceptance of the prayer is not certain.³⁹² It is as though a slave girl without ears, nose, hands and feet were sent to a king; she is alive, but it is by no means certain that she will be an acceptable gift.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE AND SPIRIT OF FORMAL PRAYER

Know that what we have said above was about the body and outward aspect of formal prayer. This form has a true nature, which is its spirit (*rūḥ*). And know that for every act of the acts of prayer and for every phrase of its phrases there is another—unique—spirit. Without the real spirit, it is as though the formal prayer were a dead person, a body without life. If the basis is present, but the actions and rules are not observed fully, it is like a blind person with his ears and nose cut off. If the actions are there, but the spirit and true nature are not in them, it is as though it has eyes, but not the power of sight, and has ears, but not the power of hearing.

The basis of the spirit of formal prayer is humility and the presence of the soul during the entire formal prayer; for the purpose of formal prayer is to direct the soul to God Most High and the renewal of the remembrance (of God) through awe and glorification. As God Most High said: *Establish worship for My remembrance*. (Q. 20:14) And the Messenger (S) said: "There are many who get nothing from formal prayer other than trouble and fatigue. This is because they are performing the formal prayer with their bodies and neglecting (the participation of)

³⁹¹ That is, that he is a Muslim and killing him is not lawful.

³⁹² That is, it is not certain that the prayer will be acceptable to God.

their souls." He also said: "There are many who pray; but, of their prayers, only a sixth or a tenth is recorded. The amount recorded is the part of each person's prayer in which his soul is present." And he said: "Pray each prayer as though thou wert saying farewell to some one"; that is, as though thou wert saying farewell to thine own passions with this prayer; rather, as though thou wert saying goodbye to everything other than God Most High and devoting thyself entirely to the formal prayer. This is why 'Ayishah³⁹³ (R) used to say: "The Messenger (S) used to talk with us and we with him. When it was time for the obligatory formal prayer, he would say: 'We have never known each other and ye have never known me'; this was from the devotion he had to God Most High." And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High does not look at the formal prayer of him whose soul is not in his prayer."

When Abraham the Friend (of God)³⁹⁴ (A) used to pray, the agitation of his soul could be heard at a distance of two miles. When 'Ali (R)³⁹⁵ desired to perform his prayers, he trembled and the color of his face changed. He would say: "The time has come for the trust³⁹⁶ which the seven heavens and the earth could not bear when it was shown to them."

Sufyan Thawri³⁹⁷ (R) says: "Every prayer in which my soul is not present is not a correct prayer." Hasan of Basrah³⁹⁸ used to say: "Every prayer in which the soul is not present is closer to punishment." Mu'adh (bin) Jabal³⁹⁹ (R) says: "Whoever looks purposely to the right or left to see who is standing there has not prayer."

³⁹³ 'Āyishah: the daughter of the Abu Bakr, the first caliph, and a favorite wife of the Prophet. She survived the Prophet by many years, dying in Madinah at the age of 67 in AH 58/678. Many Traditions are related on her authority.

³⁹⁴ Abraham: in Arabic and the Islamic world he is known as *Ibrāhīm* with the epithet "the friend of God" (*khalīl-ullāh*).

³⁹⁵ 'Ali: the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law. He married the Prophet's daughter Fatimah. He became the fourth caliph and was assassinated in AH 40/661CE. A man of immense personal integrity and incorruptible faith, the dispute over his accession to the caliphate led to the schism between the Sunnis and the Shīahs.

³⁹⁶ "the trust" (*al-amānah*), a reference to Quranic verse: *Lo! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrank from bearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it. Lo, he hath proved a tyrant and a fool!* (Q. 33:72)

³⁹⁷ Sufyan Thawri: Sufyan bin Sa'id bin Masruq, Abu 'Abdullah al-Thawri. A noted ascetic, he was also a well-known scholar, especially with regard to Tradition and the Law. He lived from about AH97/715CE to AH163/778CE. He died in Basrah.

³⁹⁸ Hasan of Basrah (Ḥasan al-Baṣrī): Abu Sa'id al-Hasan bin Yasar (AH23/642CE to AH110/728CE). Born in Madinah, his mother was a slave of one of the wives of the Prophet. He became the secretary of the governor of Khorasan (northeastern Iran, northwestern Afghanistan, and parts of southern Central Asia). Settling in the new city of Basrah, he became famous for his piety and learning.

³⁹⁹ Mu'adh (bin) Jabal: Mu'adh bin Jabal bin Aws. He helped to collect the revelations contained in the Quran. The Prophet appointed him as the judge of Yemen. He died about AH18/639CE.

Even though Abu Hanifah⁴⁰⁰ (R) and Shafi'i⁴⁰¹ (R) and most of the theologians (R) have said that prayer is valid if at the time of the Magnification the soul is disburdened, they issued this legal opinion⁴⁰² out of necessity, lest negligence overwhelm the people. The correct meaning of (that opinion) is that the sword is removed from their necks.⁴⁰³ However, only that amount (of prayer) in which the soul is present is fit to be provision for the Hereafter. In all, there is hope that the condition of a person whose soul is only present at the time of the Magnification will be better than that of him who does not perform the obligatory prayers at all; yet, there is also the fear that his condition will be worse, because a person who presents himself for service negligently may be judged more harshly than one who does not perform his prayers at all. It was for this that Hasan of Basrah (R) used to say: "This prayer is closer to punishment." Indeed, in the Traditions it is related: "Anyone whose praying does not restrain him from vile deeds and abominations has no result from it, save distancing himself from God Most High."

So, after all of this, thou hast learned that a complete formal prayer is that in which the spirit is present in its every part. (A formal prayer) in which it is not present except upon hearing the Magnification, is nothing more than a death gasp; though alive, there is nothing in but a (single) breath.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT OF THE ACTS OF FORMAL PRAYER

Know that the first thing that reaches thee is the Call to Prayer. When thou hearest it, thou must attach thyself to it in thy soul and cease any other activity thou mayest be performing, for that is what the elders did. When they heard the call to prayer, he who was a blacksmith with his hammer raised in the air would lay it down. He who was a

⁴⁰⁰ Abu Hanifah (Abū Ḥanīfah): Imam al-Nu'man bin Thabit bin Zuta Abu Hanifah. The son of a silk dealer, he was a leading scholar of Islamic law and theology and the eponymous founder of the Hanafite school of Islamic law. He earned his living as a silk dealer in his native city. He was born in Kufah in southern Iraq c. AH80/700 and died in a Baghdad prison in AH150/CE776, imprisoned by the Abbasid Caliph Mansur (rgd. AH136/CE754 to AH158/CE775) for refusing to accept the post of judge (*qāḍī*) in Kufah. A brilliant intellectual and theologian, he is the reputed founder of the Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence. Apparently, no authentic writings of his own are extant, but his influence on the development of Islamic law and ethics is incalculable. Today, more Muslims adhere to the Hanafite school than any other.

⁴⁰¹ Shafi'i: Imam Muhammad bin Idris al-Shafi'i was the founder of one of the four orthodox (or Sunnite) schools of religious jurisprudence. He was born in Askalon (or nearby Gaza) in Palestine in AH150/767CE and died in Cairo in AH204/820CE. Unlike Abu Hanifah, he left behind a considerable body of writings.

⁴⁰² "legal opinion": *fatwā*.

⁴⁰³ See Note 391 above.

shoemaker, if he was driving his awl, would leave it where it was. They would jump up from their places, reminded by this caller of the summons on the Day of Resurrection. They knew that whoever hurries at this time to answer that summons will not be met by anything at the Resurrection except glad tidings. If it be in this way that thou look upon this summoner, with thine own soul full of joy and eagerness, know that thou wilt be received in the same by that Summoner.

THE PURIFICATION: The secret of the purification is that thou knowest that the cleanliness of the clothing and the skin is the cleanliness of the sheathe. The spirit of this purification is the cleanliness of the soul through repentance, regret, and the avoidance of disagreeable habits; that is what God Most High looks at. The place of the true nature of formal prayer is the soul, but the body is the place of the form of formal prayer.

COVERING THE PRIVATE PARTS: The meaning of this is that thou coverest from the eyes of people those parts of thine outer form that are unseemly. Its spirit and secret is that thou coverest all that is unseemly of thine inner being from the gaze of God Most High and that thou knowest that nothing can be concealed from Him except that which thou cleanseest from within. And, that is cleansed when thou hast regret for the past and determine not to return to that, for: *One who repents of his sins is as one who has not sinned.* Repentance turns sins into trivialities. If thou canst, veil thy privates in shame, fear, and abashment and stand before God Most High broken-hearted and abashed, like a run-away slave who stands with an ashamed heart before his own master and does not raise his head out of his own disgrace.

TURNING TO THE DIRECTION OF PRAYER:⁴⁰⁴ The (external) meaning of this is that one turns his physical face from all other directions to one direction. The secret of this is that one turns the countenance of the soul from all that is in the two worlds⁴⁰⁵ to focus upon God Most High and to become of one nature. Just as the physical direction of formal prayer is one, so the direction of formal prayer of the soul is one, and that is God Most High. When the soul flows through the valley of thoughts, it is as though the physical face were turning from side to side. As this is not the manner of formal prayer, (distracted thoughts) are not the true nature of formal prayer. In regard to this, the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever stands in formal prayer and his mind, his face, and his soul, all three, are with God Most High, that servant (of

⁴⁰⁴ The direction of prayer is known as the *qiblah*. From wherever one is performing a formal prayer, it is the direction of Makkah, or more specifically, the House or Ka'bah situated in the heart of the city.

⁴⁰⁵ That is, this world and the Hereafter.

God) returns from formal prayer as though on that day he had been newly born from his mother; that is, he is cleansed of all sins.”

So, know truly that just as by turning the physical face away from the direction of formal prayer, the form of the prayer is nullified, so turning the face of the soul from God Most High by carrying other thoughts (to the formal prayer) nullifies the true nature of the spirit of formal prayer. Moreover, the soul takes priority, for the external is the sheathe of the internal. What is important is that which is within the sheathe; the sheathe has little value.

THE STANDING: Externally, this is that the body stands with lowered head, like a servant, before God Most High. Its secret is that the soul has ceased all movement and is prepared for service in the way of glorification and contrition. At this time, one must remember one's position before God Most High at the Resurrection. At that time, all of one's secrets will be revealed and paraded before one. One knows, too, that at this time all of one's secrets are plainly visible to God Most High. He sees everything that is in one's soul or that was in it, and one knows that He is informed of one's interior and exterior.

How strange it is that a righteous person, when someone is observing him to see how he performs his prayer, moves his limbs according to rule and does not look from side to side. He is ashamed to be seen or noticed hurrying in his prayer by someone else, yet (though) he knows that God Most High observes him, he is not ashamed before Him! What ignorance is greater than this that he be careful to pray according to rule in front of a helpless servant who has nothing, yet does not fear the eye of the King of Kings and relaxes his conduct before Him?

It was for this that Abu Hurayrah⁴⁰⁶ (R) asked: “O Messenger of God, how should one be modest before God Most High?” He replied: “Just as a righteous person is modest before his own family.”

It is for reason of this glorification (of God) that when a group of the Companions (R) were quietly at prayer, birds would not fly away from them. The birds thought that the people were statues. All of the limbs of whoever accepts the greatness of God Most High in his soul and realizes that He is watching him are submissive. And regarding this, when the Messenger (S) saw a person stroking his beard during prayer, he said: “If there were humility in his soul, his hand would also have been like his soul.”

⁴⁰⁶ Abu Hurayrah: ‘Abd al-Rahman bin Kakhr Abu Hurayrah. One of the Companions of the Prophet and a most important source for the Traditions. Abu Hurayrah (father of the kitten) was very fond of a kitten; hence the nickname. Because of his position in the Prophets' household, he related more Traditions than any other individual. He died at Madinah in AH59/678CE.

BOWING AND PROSTRATION: Know that it is, externally, the humbling of the body; the purpose of their secret is the humbling of the soul so that one may understand that putting the face on the ground—the placing of the most precious of one's body parts on the dirt, which is the lowliest of things—is so that one may know that one's origin is from earth and one's return will be to it. One shows pride appropriate to one's origin in order to understand one's own unworthiness and helplessness. In the same way, there is for every act a true nature and a secret; if one neglects them, nothing redounds to him from his acts save the outer form.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF THE RECITATION (OF THE QURAN) AND REMEMBRANCES (OF GOD) IN FORMAL PRAYER

Know that every word that must be uttered during prayer has a truth that must be understood. The speaker must be of a character to be truly sincere. For example: the meaning of *Allāhu Akbar* is "God is Greater." If one does not know this meaning, he is ignorant; if he knows it, but there is something in his soul greater than God Most High, he is not truthful. It will be said to him: "These words are the truth, but thou art speaking lies." Whenever something else is obeyed more than God Most High, that thing is greater to him, his object of worship, and his "god"⁴⁰⁷ which he serves. As God Most High says: *Hast thou seen him who takes his low desires for his god?* (Q. 25:43)

And when he said: *I have turned my face towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth*, if at that moment his soul was concerned with something else, then his statement was a lie. When the first words in the conversation with God Most High is a lie, the danger is obvious. And, when he said: *as a true believer and as a Muslim*, he claimed to be a Muslim. But the Messenger (S) said: "A Muslim is he from whose hands and tongue the Muslims are safe." He must possess these qualities or seek to become like that.

When he says: *Praise be to God*, he must renew the blessing of God Most High in his soul, and his soul must be turned into total gratitude, for this is the word of gratitude, and gratitude is in the soul.

And when he says: *Thee do we worship and Thee do we beseech for help*, the truth of sincerity must be renewed in his soul.

When he says: *Guide us*, his soul must take on the qualities of supplication and lamentation, begging for guidance. Every word in praise and the declaration (that *there is no god but God*), and in the recitation (of verses from the Quran) must be thus, as he knows. His soul is

⁴⁰⁷ The "god" (*ilāh*) that Ghazzali refers to is the one denied in the Testimony: "There is no god but God."

transformed into those qualities; but the exposition of that would be lengthy.

If there is to be a portion of the true nature of the formal prayer (for the one praying), it must be like that. If not, one has contented oneself with a meaningless form.

DISCLOSING THE REMEDY FOR THE SOUL SO THAT IT WILL BECOME PRESENT (IN PRAYER)

Know that there are two causes for the heedlessness of the soul during prayer; one is external, and the other internal:

(EXTERNAL) As for that which is external (heedlessness), it is that one prays in a place where one sees and hears, and one's soul becomes distracted by that, for the soul is the follower of the eye and the ear. The remedy for this is that one should pray in a place where one cannot hear anything. If the place is in darkness, so much the better—or one can close the eyes. Most devotees have constructed a small dark room for worship; for in a large place the soul is more (easily) distracted. Ibn 'Umar (R) whenever he prayed, removed his sword, books, and every garment from in front of him lest his eye would fall on them.

(INTERNAL) The second cause is internal: it is scattered thoughts and memories. This is more difficult and harder, and is of two kinds:

One comes from some activity that for a time is preoccupying the soul. The tactic for that is to complete the work first in order to make the soul free (of the preoccupation) and then perform the prayer. For this, the Messenger (S) said: "*When dinner is ready at the same time as the evening prayer, first eat the dinner.*" In the same way, if some one has something to say, let him say it before (praying) so that his soul may be empty of that thought.

The other kind is the thinking about a work that cannot be completed in an hour, or the scattered thoughts that normally overwhelm the soul. The remedy for this is to keep the soul focused on the meaning of the remembrances and (the verses of) the Quran one is reciting and to think about their meaning in order to drive away the other thoughts. This quiets the worries and, if it does not conquer them, the appetite for them will not be so strong. However, if the appetite is strong, thinking about it will not be overcome in this way. The solution is to take a purge to eradicate the source of the illness. This purge is the abandonment of that thing about which one is concerned in order to escape from it. If this is not possible, one will never be freed from these thoughts and one's prayer will always be mixed with the whisperings of the self.

He is like the person who sits under a tree and does not wish to listen to the chirping of the sparrows in it. He seizes a stick in his hand and drives them away, but they quickly return. If he wants to be free of

them, the solution is to cut down the tree; for as long as the tree remains, the sparrows will flock to it. In the same way, as long as the appetite for some matter occupies his soul, scattered thoughts will necessarily stay with him.

It was for this that when the Messenger (S) was brought a fine robe with beautiful designs on it as a gift and his eye fell upon the pattern during prayer, he returned the robe to the owner as soon as the prayer was over and put his old clothing back on. And, new straps were put on his slippers. His eye fell on the straps during prayer; they were fine. So, he ordered that they be taken off and the old straps put back on. Another time, brand new slippers were made for him. He found them beautiful. So he prostrated himself and said: "I have humbled myself, O God, may He be exalted and glorified, so that tomorrow Thou dost not take me as Thine enemy for that glance." He took them off and gave them to the first needy person he saw.

Once Talhah⁴⁰⁸ (R) was performing his prayer in his own date-palm garden. He saw a beautiful bird that was flying among the palms but could not find a way out. His soul became concerned (about the bird) and he lost count of the number of bows he had performed. Later, he went to the Messenger (S) and complained about his soul, and he gave the palm garden away in charity as the expiation (for that lapse).

The forefathers did many things like that and knew the remedy for (achieving) the presence of the soul. In short, if remembrance of God Most High has not overcome the soul before prayer, it will not be present during the formal prayer. Thoughts that have been admitted to the soul to the extent that they occur during prayer will not leave the soul. Whenever one wants to pray with the presence of the soul, he must treat the soul outside of prayer so that it is empty (of worldly concerns). This is accomplished by always keeping the concerns of the world at a distance from oneself and being satisfied with the world according to one's needs. And the purpose, too, of this satisfaction (of needs) is the freedom for worship. If this not be the case, the soul will not be present, except in a few prayers. One must increase the supererogatory prayers⁴⁰⁹ and prepare the soul to the point that it will be present for, say, four bows of prayer; for supererogatory prayers compensate for the obligatory.

⁴⁰⁸ Talhah: Talhah bin 'Ubayd Allah al-Taymi. An early convert to Islam, he became a general and a wealthy land owner. When about 64 years old, he was killed in battle fighting against 'Ali in AH35/656CE.

⁴⁰⁹ "supererogatory prayers": *nawāfil*.

DISCLOSING THE PRACTICES OF THE PROPHET OF CONGREGATIONAL FORMAL PRAYER

The Messenger (S) said: "One formal prayer with the congregation is like twenty-seven formal prayers alone." And he said: "Whoever performs the evening obligatory formal prayer with a congregation is as though he had spent half the night in formal prayer and supplication. Whoever performs the dawn obligatory formal prayer with a congregation is as though he spent the entire night in formal prayer and supplication." And he said: "For whoever performs obligatory formal prayer with the congregation continuously for forty days so as not to miss the first Magnification, two patents of innocence are written: one from hypocrisy and the other from hellfire." It was for this reason that whenever some one from among the forefathers missed the first Magnification, he mourned for three days. If he missed an obligatory formal congregational prayer, (he mourned) for seven days.

Sa'id Musayyib⁴¹⁰ says: "I have heard the call to the dawn obligatory formal prayer for twenty years; it has never happened that I was not in the mosque before that." Many religious scholars have said: "It is not right for a person who has no excuse to perform an obligatory formal prayer alone." Therefore, it is most important to regard congregational formal prayer highly and to observe the rules of conduct for leading the formal prayer and for following the imam.

The first is that no one should be made the imam except with willing agreement of the people who make him thus. One must be careful that he is not disliked. When he is asked (to lead the formal prayer), he should not refuse without an excuse, for the merit of being the imam is great, greater than that of the summoner to prayer.⁴¹¹ He must take care about the purification of his garments and observe the times of obligatory formal prayers and commence them at the beginning of its time period,⁴¹² not waiting for the congregation. The merit of the prayer at the beginning of its time period is great. When two of the Companions were present, they did not wait for a third. At a funeral prayer, when there were four

⁴¹⁰ Sa'id Musayyib: Sa'id bin al-Musayyib al-Qurashi al-Makhzuni. He was of the generation following the Companions called the Followers (*tābi'in*). He was famous for his judicial decisions (*fatwā*) and was called the *faqīh al-fuqahā* (the jurist of the jurists) and also the Lord of the Followers (*sayyid al-tābi'in*). He is quoted as saying that he would walk nights and days in search of a single Tradition. He died AH94/712CE.

⁴¹¹ "the summoner to prayer": *mu'adhdhin*.

⁴¹² The day is divided into periods for each obligatory formal prayer. For example, the noon prayer begins at high noon (according to the position of the sun, not according to the clock) and lasts until mid-afternoon when the period for the afternoon prayer commences. Ghazzali says that performing obligatory formal prayers at the beginning of their portion of the day is more meritorious than later on within the limits of that period, although a prayer is equally valid when performed any time within those parameters.

persons present, they did not wait for a fifth. One day the Messenger(S) was delayed, and they did not wait for him. 'Abdurrahman 'Awf went forward (to lead the prayer). When the Messenger (S) arrived, one bow had been completed. When the prayer was over, they were anxious (about the Prophet's reaction to this), but the Messenger (S) said: "Ye have done well. Always do thus."

Leading the prayer should be performed purely for God, and the imam should not accept any payment. The Magnification should not be pronounced until the lines are straight. He should raise his voice when pronouncing the Magnifications and then recite the Intention of Imamate in order to receive its spiritual reward. If he does not, the congregational prayer is valid, but the spiritual reward for leading the congregation does not redound to him.

He should recite the Quran loudly in *jahri*⁴¹³ prayers and observe three silent pauses: First: after pronouncing the Magnification, while he is reciting: *I turn my face...*,⁴¹⁴ and the congregation is preparing for the recitation of the Opening; second: after reciting the Opening, he should pause so that the slower members of the congregation may complete their recitations of it; and third: after reciting the other passage from the Quran, he should pause long enough so that the Magnification will be separate from the Quranic recitation. The members of the congregation do not recite anything after the Opening, unless they are too far away to hear the recitation of the imam. He performs the bows and prostrations unhurriedly and does not utter the praise more than three times.

Anas⁴¹⁵ (R) says: "No one was more unhurried or more complete in prayer than the Messenger (S)." The Practice of the Prophet is that prayer not be prolonged, as there may be persons in the congregation who are weak or have some business to attend to. The congregation must move after the imam does, not at the same time. They do not press their foreheads to the ground in the prostration before the imam has done so. They do not begin their bow until the imam has reached the limit of his, for this is (the meaning of) *following* the imam. If one deliberately precedes the imam, one's prayer is nullified. After the salutations (at the end of prayer), (the imam) should not sit long before saying: *O God, Thou art the Peace, Peace is from Thee, Thou hast given blessings, O Lord of Majesty and Veneration.*

Then (the imam) rises slowly and faces the people and offers supplications. The people should not turn their faces away from him, for that is disliked.

⁴¹³ "*jahri* prayers": Those prayers in which the Opening (*Al-Fātihah*) and the following Quranic selections are recited aloud in the first two bows, i.e., the dawn, sunset, and evening prayers.

⁴¹⁴ See Note 374.

⁴¹⁵ Anas: Anas Malik. See Note 358.

DISCLOSING THE MERIT OF THE FRIDAY CONGREGATIONAL FORMAL PRAYER

Know that Friday is a great day and its merit is enormous. It is the festival of the believers. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever does not attend three Friday prayers without excuse has discarded Islam and his soul is tarnished."

In the Traditions, it is related that on every Friday God Most High liberates six hundred thousand servants from hell. The Messenger (S) said: "Every day (the heat of) hell flares up at the time of decline of the sun, except on Friday. On that day, it does not flare up." And he said: "Whoever dies on a Friday receives the reward of a martyr and is exempted from the torment of the grave."

THE CONDITIONS OF FRIDAY CONGREGATIONAL FORMAL PRAYER

Know that just as there are conditions for other formal prayers, so there are (additional) conditions for the Friday congregational prayer. There are six additional special conditions:

The first condition is time. If the imam should utter the final salutations after the time for the afternoon obligatory formal prayer has begun, the prayer is lost and should be completed as though it were the noon obligatory formal prayer.

The second condition is place. This formal prayer is not convened in the desert or among tents. Instead, it must be held in a city or a village in which there are at least forty adult, sane, and free men resident. If it is not held in a mosque, is it valid.

The third condition is number. It is not correct to hold the Friday congregational obligatory formal prayer unless forty free, legally competent residents are present. If fewer than this number are present, either in the sermon or in the obligatory formal prayer, it would appear to be invalid.

The fourth condition is the congregation. If the each of the people performs formal prayer alone, it is not correct. However, if a person comes in time for the last bow, his formal prayer is valid, even if he is alone in the second bow.⁴¹⁶ If he arrives too late for the second bow, then he recites the Intention for the noon obligatory formal prayer.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁶ The make-up bow to compensate for a missed bow or bows in a congregational prayer due to late arrival.

⁴¹⁷ The obligatory Friday congregational prayer has two bows and is performed in lieu of the usual obligatory noon prayer of four bows. If one arrives too late to participate in the obligatory Friday congregational prayer, one should perform the four-bow noon prayer.

The fifth condition is that one has not performed another Friday congregational formal prayer,⁴¹⁸ for it is not lawful to perform two such prayers in the same city, except if the situation is that the prayer (area) is filled to capacity or performing the prayer in it is difficult. If one cannot (pray there) and performs a second Friday formal prayer, it is valid if the first Magnification has been uttered before.

The sixth condition is that there be two sermons before the formal prayer; both are obligatory. Sitting between the two sermons is obligatory (upon the imam) and standing during the sermons is obligatory (upon the imam). During the first sermon, four things are obligatory: Praising God—saying *Praise be God* is enough; blessing the Messenger (S); advising piety—I counsel the servants of God to devote themselves to God is sufficient; and to recite at least one verse from the Quran. There are the same obligations in the second sermon, but instead of a verse from the Quran, a supplication is offered.

Know that this obligatory (Friday congregational) formal prayer is not required of women, slaves, children, and travelers. It is lawful not to attend for reason of mud, rain, and sickness—so that the illness may not spread—but it is preferred that such a person perform the obligatory noon prayer after the congregation has dispersed from the obligatory Friday prayer.

THE (TEN) RULES OF ETIQUETTE AT THE FRIDAY PRAYER

Know that there are ten Practices of the Messenger, and people should observe (these) rules of etiquette:

THE FIRST ETIQUETTE: Greeting Friday on Thursday with thy soul; preparing such things as white clothing, taking care of other activities beforehand so that one may betake himself to the mosque early; sitting quietly after the afternoon prayer on Thursday in praise and seeking forgiveness—for the virtue of this hour is very great and is (more) excellent in comparison with that hour on Friday. It has also been said that lying with one's wife is a practice of the Prophet so that she too will need to perform the greater ablution (bath), both (husband and wife), on Friday.

THE SECOND ETIQUETTE: One should perform the greater ablution the early morning if one wishes to go the mosque early; if not, it is preferred to delay. The Messenger (S) ordered the Friday bath, a definite order to the point where some of religious scholars have supposed that it is a divinely imposed obligation. The people of Madinah, when they wanted to speak harshly to someone, would say: "Thou art worse than a person who does not bathe on Friday." If

⁴¹⁸ That is, on the same Friday.

someone is in a state of ritual impurity, when he has performed the greater ablution for that, it is preferred that he recite the intention to perform the Friday bath and again throw water over himself. However, if he declares both intentions⁴¹⁹ together, (one bath) will suffice and he will obtain the reward of the Friday bath.

THE THIRD ETIQUETTE: One should go to the mosque well-turned out, clean, and in a good state. Cleanliness is that one should remove (unwanted) hair, pare the nails, and trim the mustache. If one has gone to the bath earlier and done these things, that will suffice. Well-turned out is that one wears clean white clothing—for God Most High likes white clothing—applies some pleasant fragrance, with the intention of showing respect to the mosque and for the obligatory formal prayer, so that no unpleasant odor may emit from his person to disturb others and cause them to talk about him.

THE FOURTH ETIQUETTE: Going to the mosque early, for its merit is great. In the old days, they used to repair to the mosque in the early morning carrying lamps. The roads were so crowded that it was difficult to walk. Ibn Mas'ud,⁴²⁰ may God have mercy upon him, went on a path and found that three men had gotten (to the mosque) before he had. He rebuked himself and said: "Thou art in the fourth degree! What will be the outcome for thee?"

They used to say that the first innovation that appeared in Islam was the omission of the practices of the Messenger. How is it that while Jews and Christians go early to synagogues and churches on Saturday and Sunday, Muslims are laggards on Friday, which is their day?

The Messenger (S) has said: "For the person who goes at the first hour on this day to the mosque, it is as though he has sacrificed a camel. If he goes at the second hour, it is as though he has sacrificed a cow; at the third hour, a sheep; at the fourth hour, a chicken; at the fifth hour, an egg. If he goes at the time the imam is ascending the pulpit, the angels who were recording these sacrifices roll up their scrolls and become attentive to the sermon. Whoever arrives at this time has the reward of the obligatory prayer, but nothing else."

FIFTH (ETIQUETTE): Not to climb over people if one is late, for it is related in the Traditions that should a person do that, at the Resurrection, they will make a bridge of him for the people to pass over. The Messenger (S) saw someone doing this. When the prayer was completed, he asked the man: "Why didst thou not participate in the obligatory prayer?" He said: "O Messenger of God, I am here with thee."

⁴¹⁹ That is, the intention to perform the greater and ablution to restore the state of purity and the intention to perform the greater ablution for Friday.

⁴²⁰ Ibn Mas'ud: 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, a Companion of the Prophet and one of the "illustrious ten" (*'asharah mubashsharah*) who were assured of Paradise by the Prophet. He died at Madinah in AH32/652CE at the age of 60.

The Messenger said: "I saw thee crawling over the congregation." That is to say, for a person who does thus it is as though he had not attended the prayer. However, if there be an empty place in the first row, it is lawful to aim for that first, for the fault is those who left the first row incomplete.

THE SIXTH ETIQUETTE: One should not pass in front of a person performing his prayer. When one sits by a wall or column, one should sit close to it so that there is no passage in front of him, for it is forbidden to pass in front of someone who is praying. In the Traditions, it is related: "If dust is raised so that the breeze blows it at him, it is better than passing in front of one who is praying."

THE SEVENTH ETIQUETTE: One should seek (to pray in) the first rank. If one is not able to, howsoever closer to it the better, for its merit is great, unless there are soldiers in the front rank wearing silk clothing, or the black clothing of the preacher is silken, or his sword is of gold, or some other prohibited thing. In that case, the farther away one is the better, for it is not appropriate to choose a place where there is some prohibited thing.

THE EIGHTH ETIQUETTE: When the preacher comes out, one should not talk and should attend to the replies (to the phrases) of the summoner to assemble for formal prayer. then pay attention to the sermon. If someone speaks, one should silence him with a gesture, not with words, for the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever says 'Be quiet!' during the sermon, or 'Listen!' speaks idly; whoever speaks idly at this time has not attended the Friday congregational prayer."

If one is seated far away and cannot hear the sermon, he still must remain silent, nor should he sit anyplace where people are talking. He should not perform any formal prayer at that time, except the Greeting to the Mosque.⁴²¹

THE NINTH ETIQUETTE: After one prays, one should recite "*the Praise*" seven times,⁴²² "*Say, He is the One God*"⁴²³ seven times. He should also recite the two "*I seek refuge*"s,⁴²⁴ for in the non-Prophetic Traditions,⁴²⁵ it is written: "They are like a refuge from Satan from one Friday to the next." Then one should say: "*O God! O Free From Want (Ghani)! O Praised One! O Inceptor! O Restorer! O Merciful! O Friend! Bestow upon me from what is lawful to Thee rather than what is unlawful, and in obedience to Thee rather than from Thy punishment,*

⁴²¹ The Greeting to the Mosque: a two-bow supererogatory prayer performed upon entering a mosque.

⁴²² One should recite the first chapter of the Quran, the Opening (*Fātiḥah*) seven times.

⁴²³ One should recite the 112th chapter of the Quran seven times.

⁴²⁴ One should recite the 113th and 114th chapters of the Quran once. They both begin *Say: I seek refuge with my Lord...*

⁴²⁵ "Traditions, non-Prophetic": *āthār*.

and from Thy grace rather than from anyone other than Thee!" It is said: "Whoever persists in this invocation, his sustenance will appear from a place from which he had no hope and will become free of needing (the help) of others."

After this, one performs six bows of formal prayer, the Practice of the Prophet, for this is the number which has been ascribed to the Messenger (S).

THE TENTH ETIQUETTE: One should remain in the mosque until the time for the afternoon prayer has come. It is even more meritorious to sit in the mosque until the sunset prayer. It is said: "This has the reward of the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimage."⁴²⁶ And if one is not able to do this and returns home, he should remember God Most High until that time,⁴²⁷ and not neglect this while Friday lasts, lest he be deprived of its grace.

THE (SEVEN) RULES FOR FRIDAY

One should strive for seven virtues throughout all of this day:

The *FIRST* rule is to attend an edifying assembly in the early morning and to avoid storytellers and circles of gossipers. One should repair to the assembly of a person whose speech and conduct do not excite love for the world, but rather invite one to the Hereafter. Any talk which is not like that is not an assembly for edification. However, if it is (an edifying assembly), there is a Tradition that states: "Attending one such assembly is more meritorious than a thousand bows of formal prayer."

SECOND: During this day, there is a precious and noble hour. In the Traditions is related: "Whoever makes a request during this hour, it is granted." There is a dispute about which hour is meant: Is it the time of the rising of the sun or its declining?⁴²⁸ Is it sunset or is at the time of the call to formal prayer? Is it the moment the preacher ascends the pulpit, or the time when congregation assemblies in ranks for formal prayer? Is it the time of the afternoon obligatory formal prayer? The truth is that its exact time is unknown and ambiguous, like the Night of Power.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁶ The Greater Pilgrimage is called *Hajj*, and the Lesser is called *Umrah*.

⁴²⁷ That is, the sunset obligatory formal prayer, for in the Islamic calendar, the next day (Saturday) begins at sunset, in accordance with Semitic custom, rather than at midnight as is the Western custom. Friday ends with the call to prayer for the sunset prayer, which begins Saturday.

⁴²⁸ That is, late afternoon.

⁴²⁹ The Night of Power (*shab-i qadr*): this is mentioned 97th chapter of the Quran: *Lo! We revealed it on the Night of Power. Ah, what will convey unto thee what the Night of Power is? The night of Power is better than a thousand months! The angels and the Spirit descend therein by permission of their Lord with all decrees. Peace, until the rising of the*

Therefore, one must be alert for it throughout the day and never stop remembering (God) and worshipping (Him).

THIRD: During this day one should send many blessings upon the Messenger (S), for he said: "The sins of eighty years are forgiven for him who sends blessings upon me eighty times." They asked him: 'O Messenger of God, how should we send these blessings?' He said: '*O God, bless Muhammad and bless the people of Muhammad with a blessing that is acceptable to Thee and rendered for his truth! Grant him the means and the merit. Send him to the praiseworthy place Thou hast promised him. Reward him on our behalf that which is best of what Thou dost reward a prophet on behalf of his people. Bless all of his brothers from among the righteous prophets, O Most Merciful of the Merciful!*'

It is said: "Whoever repeats this on Friday seven times will receive the intercession of the Messenger (S); it is assured." If one says only "*O God, bless Muhammad and the people of Muhammad,*" it is enough.

FOURTH: One should read the Quran much during this day. One should read *The Chapter of the Cave*,⁴³⁰ its merit is mentioned in the Traditions. The ascetics of the forefathers used to recite *The Chapter of the Unity*⁴³¹ a thousand times on Friday and bless (the Prophet) a thousand times and say a thousand times: "*Glory be to God! Praise be to God! There is no god but God and God is greater.*"

FIFTH: On this day one should perform more (formal) prayers. In the Traditions, it is related: "Whoever goes to the mosque should immediately perform a four-bow prayer. In each bow, he should recite the Opening once and Say: *He is God, the One!*"⁴³² fifty times. Such a one will not depart from this world without having been shown his place in heaven or having it shown to someone else who will inform him of it."⁴³³

dawn. (Q. 97:1-5) Much has been written through the centuries about the meaning and the spiritual and mystical interpretation of this chapter. There is a consensus that it is one of the last ten nights of Ramadan, probably the 25th, 27th, or 29th night. It appears to be associated with the first revelation of the Quran received by the Prophet. The revelations continued for about 23 years.

⁴³⁰ "The Chapter of The Cave" (*Sūrat al-Kahf*): the 18th chapter of the Quran.

⁴³¹ "The Chapter of the Unity" (*Sūrat al-Ikhlās*): the 112th chapter of the Quran. The word *ikhhlās* literally means "sincerity, loyalty, fidelity." As it comes from a root meaning "being pure, being saved from, being liberated," it can be construed to mean 'being cleansed of (polytheism, or other-than-God). Among other things, it is a refutation of the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus and his fatherhood by God.

⁴³² These are the first words of the Chapter of the Unity mentioned in the previous Note. It should be remarked that this chapter is among the shortest in the Quran, consisting of fewer than twenty words in Arabic.

⁴³³ That is, someone else will see his place in an inspired dream and inform him of it.

It is recommended that on this day one recite the following four chapters in these four bows: *The Cattle*, *The Cave*, *Ta Ha*, and *Ya Sin*.⁴³⁴ If one cannot do this, then one should recite: *The Prostration*, *Luqman*, *Smoke*, and *The Sovereignty*.⁴³⁵

Ibn 'Abbas (R) never omitted the formal prayer of praise⁴³⁶ on Friday; this formal prayer is well known. It is preferred that one pray until noon.⁴³⁷ After that, one should attend some edifying assembly until the time of the afternoon prayer, and after that, engage in praise and seeking forgiveness until the sunset prayer.

SIXTH: One should not neglect giving alms on this day, even if it is nothing more than a piece of bread; for the merit of almsgiving on this day is increased, but any beggar who begs at the time of the sermon should be stopped. It is unseemly to give something to such a person.

SEVENTH: In general, one must, this day of the week, regard the Hereafter with certainty. One should devote the whole day to good works, and do the work of the world on other days. For God Most High says: *And when the prayer is ended, then disperse throughout the land and seek of God's grace.* (Q. 62:10) Anas (R) says: "This does not mean buying and selling and the business of the world; rather, it is the seeking of knowledge, visiting brethren and the ill, accompanying the (funeral) cortege, and acts such as these."

DISCUSSION: Know that what is absolutely necessary about formal prayer has been said. Other matters should be asked as the occasion arises, for they cannot be discussed in a book of this kind. However, there are many devilish insinuations in one's Intention to perform the prayer. They should be remarked upon here.

Know that these insinuations occur to a person who has some flaw in his mind, or is a melancholic, or is ignorant of the Religious Law and does not know the significance of the Intention. Thine intention is the desire that turns thy face to the direction of formal prayer. It inspires

⁴³⁴ "The Cattle (*al-An'ām*), The Cave (*al-Kahf*), *Tā Hā*, and *Yā Sīn*": These are the 6th, the 18th, the 20th, and the 36th chapters of the Quran respectively. The last two take their names from the Arabic letters, the like of which head several chapters. The significance of these letters is the subject of much speculation.

⁴³⁵ "The Prostration (*al-Sajdah*), Luqman, Smoke (*al-Dukhān*), and The Sovereignty (*al-Mulk*)": these are the 32nd, the 31st, the 44th, and the 67th chapters of the Quran respectively.

⁴³⁶ "Formal prayer of praise": *tasbīh*.

⁴³⁷ Noon: the text has *waqt-i zawāl* which is capable of several interpretations. Literally, it means 'the time of the decline'; that is, the point where the sun starts to decline from its zenith in the sky, which is the true noon. (This is not necessarily the same as noon according to modern time zones.) The period referred to by Ghazzali is the forenoon.

thee to rise to thy feet and follow its command. It is as though someone says to thee: "Such-and-such a learned scholar has come! Stand up for him and venerate him!" Thou dost not say to thyself: "I have formed the Intention to stand on my feet in respect for such a person and at the command of such-and-such a person." Instead, thou standest up immediately and the intention is in thy soul, without thy saying the words in thy soul or with thy tongue. All that thou sayest to the soul is talking to thyself, not the declaration of Intention, for the intention is that eagerness which appears in the soul and impels thee (to act).

Moreover, thou must know what the command is: that it is for the performance of the noon prayer or the afternoon prayer. When the soul is not neglectful of this, thou sayest *God is Greater!* If it is negligent, thou remindest thyself. Do not suppose that the meaning of the performance of a divine command and the noon obligatory formal prayer are collected at once in the soul in detail; because they are near to each other, they (only) seem to be collected. This is sufficient, for if some one says to thee: "Art thou performing the obligatory noon formal prayer?" thou sayest: "Yes." At the moment thou sayest "yes," the general meanings of this are in thy soul, not the details.

So thy speaking to thyself—as a reminder—is the same as the question of that person, and "God is Greater" takes the place of thy saying "yes." Anything more than that is an enquiry which will distract thy soul and the prayer. Thou must take it easy. If thou hast done this much, in the proper manner, know that the prayer is valid, for the Intention of prayer is like the intention of all acts. For this reason, during the time of the Messenger (S), none of the Companions (R) were ever disturbed with reservations about the declaration of the Intention, for they knew that the matter was easier (than that). As for that person who does not know this, it is out of his ignorance.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCERNING THE POOR RATE

Know that the obligatory poor rate⁴³⁸ is one of the Pillars of Islam, for the Messenger (S) said: "The edifice of Islam is built upon five things: the Testimony that *There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God*; formal prayer, the obligatory poor rate, fasting, and the (Greater) Pilgrimage." In the Traditions, it is related: "A fiery brand will be placed on the breasts of those who possess gold and silver and do not pay the poor rate so that it comes out of their backs. Whoever possesses animals⁴³⁹ and does not pay the poor rate will be overcome by them on the Day of Resurrection so that they will gore him with their horns and trample him under their hoofs. When they have done all this, they will start over again. They will continue to do so until that time all people are called to account." This Tradition is found in two of the authentic books of traditions.⁴⁴⁰ Therefore, (the poor rate) is incumbent upon someone possessing property and a religious obligation to know the rules for paying it.

EXCURSUS: CONCERNING THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF POOR RATE AND THEIR CONDITIONS

Know that the obligatory poor rate is of six⁴⁴¹ kinds:

THE FIRST KIND: THE POOR RATE ON LIVESTOCK. These are camels, cattle, and sheep. However, the poor rate is not paid on animals such as horses and donkeys. Four conditions regarding this poor rate must be observed:

The first condition: They must not be animals that are fed fodder; rather, they must be grazers not requiring much expense. If, during the year, (the grazing animals) are fed enough fodder to be considered fodder-eating animals, then they are no longer subject to the poor rate.

The second condition: They must be the property of the owner for the entire year. If they leave one's ownership, they are not subject to

⁴³⁸ The poor rate (*zakāt*) is an obligatory annual tax on certain kinds of property. Voluntary charity or alms is called *ṣadaqah*.

⁴³⁹ Animals of commercial value such as beasts of burden, cattle, sheep, and other livestock.

⁴⁴⁰ A reference to the six books of traditions compiled by pious scholars in the 3rd Islamic (late 9th and early 10th CE) century. They are all considered authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) by Sunni Muslims. Those by Bukhari and Abu Muslim are the most highly regarded of the six.

⁴⁴¹ Both Persian texts have only five, the 'Id tax being the fifth. A comparison with the Arabic *Revival* shows that the fifth kind was the poor rate on mines, absent from the Persian texts. In the *Revival*, the 'Id tax is the sixth kind.

the poor rate. On the other hand, their offspring are counted, even if they are born at the end of the year and the poor rate must be paid for them following the principle of assets.

The third condition: One gains wealth from that property and it is in one's control. However, if (the animals) are lost or taken from one by force, the poor rate does not apply to them, unless they are returned to him with all profit that would have been earned from them. Then, (the payment of) the poor rate for the past becomes obligatory. If someone is in debt, in an amount equaling the livestock he possesses, it is correct that he not pay the poor rate, for in truth he is poor.

The fourth condition: One must possess the requisite wealth in an amount to be counted among the wealthy (and thus subject to the poor rate), for wealth is not obtained from a small amount.

As for camels: Unless there be five (or more), (payment of the poor rate) for them is not required. For five camels, (the payment is) one sheep; for ten, two; for fifteen, three; for twenty, four. These sheep must be at least one year old. (If the payment is made) in goats, not less than two years old. If there be twenty-five camels, then it is one one-year old female camel. If there be none, then a two-year old male may given in its place. Thereafter, nothing additional is required until there are thirty-six. For thirty-six, a two-year old female is necessary; for forty-six, a three-year old female; for sixty-one, a four-year old female; for seventy-six, two two-year old females; for ninety-one, two three-year old females; for one hundred and twenty-one, three two-year old females. After that, the calculation is that for every fifty, one three-year old female and for every forty, a two-year old female.

As for cattle: No poor rate is required until their number is thirty. Then a one-year old is necessary; for forty, a two-year old; for sixty, two one-year olds. After that, the calculation is one two-year old for every forty, and a one-year old is given for every thirty.

As for sheep: For each forty, one; for one hundred and twenty-one, two; for two hundred and one, three; for four hundred, four. After that, the calculation is one for every one hundred not less than a year old. If it is male, then not less than two years old would be suitable.⁴⁴² If there are two persons whose sheep are held jointly and both are of sufficient means to qualify for the poor rate—and neither one of them is either an

⁴⁴² This calculation differs slightly from the one Ghazzali gives in the *Revival*. The relevant passage in that book says that poor rate becomes obligatory only when the number of sheep reaches 40; then a ewe in her second year or a goat in its third year must be given. Nothing more accrues until the number of animals is 121, then two must be given. For two hundred, three; for 400, four. Thereafter, one for every one hundred.

unbeliever or a self-ransomed slave⁴⁴³—then the two are as though they were one proprietor. If they both have no more than forty, then half a sheep is required (from each owner); if they possess one hundred and twenty, both together, one sheep is sufficient.⁴⁴⁴

*THE SECOND KIND: THE POOR RATE OF TITHES.*⁴⁴⁵ Whoever possesses 800 *manns*⁴⁴⁶ of wheat, barley, currants or raisins, dates, or some other edible thing suitable for eating and is the food of a class (of people) upon which they can subsist, such as chickpeas, rice, beans, etc., giving tithes on it is obligatory. Things that are not (basic) comestibles, such as cotton, walnuts, linen, and fruit, are not subject to the poor rate. If one has 400 *manns* of wheat and 400 *manns* of barley, they are not subject to the tithe, for eligibility to pay the poor rate must be from one kind of goods.

If there is no water (for cultivation) from a canal or an underground channel, and water is instead drawn from a well by buckets, then one half of one tenth is necessary.⁴⁴⁷ It is not proper to give it for grapes and fresh dates; however, it is for raisins and (mature) dates, unless raisins are not made from such grapes. In that case, the tithe is lawful. It is necessary when the grapes have taken on their color and the wheat and barley kernels have hardened that they not be disposed of until they have first been appraised in order to find out how much the share of the poor will be. Then, after the amount has been made known and agreed upon, it is lawful to dispose of them all.

THE THIRD KIND: THE POOR RATE FOR GOLD AND SILVER. For every 200 drams of silver, five *dirams*⁴⁴⁸ are required at the end of the year. For every twenty dinars, half a dinar: that is one tenth of one fourth.⁴⁴⁹ Whatever is over this is calculated the same way. For silver, for golden and silver swords,⁴⁵⁰ and for ornaments made of gold and silver on swords, animal harnesses, etc., and everything that is not permissible,

⁴⁴³ "a self-ransomed slave: (*mukātab*): a slave or bondman who has made an agreement with his master to work at some enterprise and gradually purchase his freedom.

⁴⁴⁴ Ghazzali, in the equivalent passage in *The Revival*, states that the poor rate for two owners who own a flock jointly is the same as for one owner with respect to the rules of the poor rate. If they jointly own forty sheep, they must give own; if three persons own a flock of 120 sheep, each must give a sheep.

⁴⁴⁵ Tithes (*mu'ashsharāt*): literally one tenth; that is, a 10% tax.

⁴⁴⁶ See Note 329 above.

⁴⁴⁷ That is, the tax is 5%.

⁴⁴⁸ *diram* (dram): A weight that in Persia was, for example, one four-hundredth of a *mann*. (See Note 329 above.) In modern times, it is the equivalent of a gram.

⁴⁴⁹ That is, the tax is one fortieth, or 2.5%.

⁴⁵⁰ "swords" (*khanūr*, also *khunūr* or *khunnūr*): AA in a footnote says this means 'swords.' Steingass gives additional meanings, including 'utensils, knives, pots, etc.,' plus other meanings referring to non-metallic things.

the poor rate must be paid. However, ornaments which are—for a man or a woman—permissible to use are not subject to the poor rate. If one has gold and silver lent out to people that could be called in if one wished, it is subject to the poor rate.

THE FOURTH KIND: THE POOR RATE ON TRADE. If something is bought in the amount of twenty dinars, with the intention of trade, and the year ends, the cash poor rate becomes obligatory, and whatever profit has been made during the year is counted. At the end of every year, one must assess the value of the goods. Then, if the capital was originally gold or silver, (the poor rate) must be given in that form. If the goods were bought with cash, it should be paid in the coin most commonly used in the city.⁴⁵¹ If one has goods and intends to trade them, but does not buy anything with them, they are not counted at the beginning of the year. Whenever during the year the intention to trade is rescinded, the poor rate need not be paid. However, if it is cash and the person qualifies for paying the poor rate, the beginning of the (fiscal) year is calculated from the time when he becomes eligible to pay the poor rate.

THE FIFTH KIND: THE POOR RATE OF THE 'ID FESTIVAL. Every Muslim who, on the eve of the ('Id) Festival has more food than he himself or his family will consume during that day,⁴⁵² and has something in excess—not counting the house, clothing and necessities—must give a *ṣā'*⁴⁵³ of foodstuffs of the kind that are his usual food. That is, three *manns* less one-third of a *mann*. If (one's staple food) is wheat, barley is not suitable. If it is of a kind of grain, it should be of the best kind. Flour, etc., should not be given in place of wheat grain, according to Shafi'i (R). This poor rate must be given for every person for whom thou providest (their) expenditure, such as women, children, parents, and bondmen. The 'Id poor rate for bondmen is joint; two are counted as one. One does not need to pay a poor rate for an unbelieving bondman. If a

⁴⁵¹ In this period, coinage was not a monopoly of the central government as it is today. Although there were letters of credit and other banking instruments, daily trade was conducted with coins, usually of copper, silver, and gold. These were issued by kings, governors, warlords and lacked standard weight and purity. Some coinages had a better reputation for purity than others. There was also considerable counterfeiting and adulteration. Coin clipping was also common. Certain coins were favored in one district but not in another. Recognizing this situation, Ghazzali does not declare a single standard, but leaves it to the custom of the place. Incidentally, for nearly two centuries prior to the oil era, the standard coin, because of its reputation and recognizability, in much of the Middle East was Austrian Maria Theresa dollar rather than any local issue.

⁴⁵² That is, for the day commencing with the final breaking of the fast of Ramadan (*iftār*) and the festival following it. The first day of Shawwāl.

⁴⁵³ *ṣā'*; a dry measure given various values. Steingass makes it the equivalent of five and one-third *ratls*, with each *ratl* the equivalent of a pint.

woman wishes to pay her own poor rate from her own property, it is lawful. If the husband pays it without her directive, it is lawful.

This much of the rules of the poor rate must be learned. If some other circumstance occurs, one ought to know that he must ask about it and do so.

THE MANNER OF GIVING THE POOR RATE

Know that one must observe five things in giving the poor rate:

FIRST: The declaration of the Intention of the poor rate is a religious obligation. If one is appointing some one else to do this, at the time of the appointment, the Intention must be stated, or the representative must be instructed to declare the Intention at the time of its distribution. When the guardian of the property of an infant pays the poor rate on it, he should declare the Intention.

SECOND: When the year is ended, one should hasten; inexcusable delay is not seemly. The poor rate for the 'Id Festival should not be delayed and hurrying to do so during the month of Ramadan is lawful, but not before (the commencement of Ramadan). Pre-paying the poor rate on property is meritorious during the entire year, with the condition that the recipient of the payment remains poor until the end of the year. If the recipient dies before the completion of the year, or becomes solvent, or apostatizes, that payment must be made up.

THIRD: The poor rate must be paid of the same kind as the thing assessed. According to the Shafi'ite school, it is not correct to give gold in place of silver, wheat in place of barley, or anything else of an equivalent value.⁴⁵⁴

FOURTH: Charity should be given where the property is, where the poor can see the property. If (charity) is given to a different city, the correct view is that the obligation of the poor rate upon that donor is not reduced (by the gift).

FIFTH: The poor rate should be divided among eight categories of people, however many there are, so that each group is not less than three and the total is twenty-four. If the poor rate is one *diram*, according to the Shafi'ite school, it should be divided into eight equal parts. Then each part is divided among the persons of the category as they wish, even if it is not equal.

In these days, three of those (eight) categories (of poor rate recipients) are uncommon: the warriors for the faith, those who are to be reconciled, and the collectors. But the poor, the destitute, the captives to

⁴⁵⁴ That is, if the wealth which serves as the basis of the poor rate assessment is gold, it must be paid in gold; if it is wheat, it must be paid in wheat. The equivalent value in some other form or of some other kind is not acceptable.

be ransomed, the wayfarers, and the debtors can be found.⁴⁵⁵ According to Shafi'i, each person should give the poor rate to at least fifteen individuals.

In the Shafi'ite school, there are two difficult problems: one is that substitution (of one kind of goods for another) is not permitted, and the other is that it must be distributed among all (qualified recipients). Most of the people follow the Hanafite school with respect to these two matters. We hope that that they will not be seized (for punishment on the Day of Resurrection) for this, *if God Most High wills it*.

DISCLOSING THESE PEOPLE: THEY ARE OF EIGHT CATEGORIES

THE FIRST CATEGORY is the Poor. This is a person who possesses nothing and cannot do any business. If he has food for the day and clothing on his body, he is not poor. If he has no more than one half of his daily sustenance, or has a shirt but no turban, or has a turban but no shirt, then he is poor. If he can earn money with some tool, but does not have the tool, then he is poor. If he is a student who, if he were to engage in some trade, would be held back in his studies, he is poor. Such persons are not often found, except children. The solution is to seek out a poor family man and give him the portion of the poor on behalf of his children.

THE SECOND CATEGORY is the Destitute. Anyone whose basic expenditures are greater than his income is destitute. Even if he has a house and clothing, but does not have the expenses for a year and he cannot depend upon his earnings, it is lawful to give him enough to complete the year. If he has carpets, utensils, and household furnishings, because he has need of them, he is (still counted among the) destitute. If he has something in excess of his need, he is not destitute.

THE THIRD CATEGORY is the Collectors of the Poor Rate. They collected the poor rate and distribute it among the poor. Their salary is paid from the poor rate.

THE FOURTH CATEGORY is Those Who Are To Be Reconciled. This is a great person who embraces Islam if he is given property. Others will be encouraged to accept Islam by his example.

THE FIFTH CATEGORY is the Bondmen to be ransomed. These are bondmen who purchase their freedom by giving their price to their master.

⁴⁵⁵ The categories of the recipients of the poor rate are enumerated in the Q. 9:60. Extensive commentaries have been written about the exact meaning of these words and there are differences of interpretation and usage among the chief religious schools of Islam.

THE SIXTH CATEGORY is the Debtors: persons who have fallen into debt not by reason of vice and who are poor; or a person of means who has incurred debts for some good purpose to prevent social turmoil.

THE SEVENTH CATEGORY is the Warriors for the Defence of the Faith. These are warriors who do not receive payment from the public exchequer, even if they have wealth. They are given equipment from the poor rate funds.

THE EIGHTH CATEGORY is the Wayfarers. Travelers who do not have traveling provision, either passing through, or traveling from their own city, are given supplies and rent. It is lawful to accept the word of any person who declares "I am a pauper" or "I am needy," for one cannot be certain that he is lying. However, if the traveler or the warrior does not travel or go to battle, then the poor rate should be taken back from him. The other categories must be validated by the word of trustworthy persons.

THE INMOST SECRETS OF GIVING THE POOR RATE

Know that just as formal prayer has an external form and an inner reality that is the spirit of that form, so does the poor rate. If a person does not comprehend the inner mystery and the true nature of the poor rate, it is a spiritless form for him. Its secret lies in three things:

THE FIRST (SECRET) is that the people are commanded to the love and friendship of God Most High and there is no believer who does not claim this. Indeed, they are commanded not to love anyone more than God Most High, as is said in the Honorable Quran: *Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your wives and your kinsfolk and the wealth ye have acquired, and trade whose dullness ye fear, and dwellings ye love, are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait till God brings His command to pass. And God guides not the transgressing people.* (Q. 9:24)

There is no believer who does not claim that he loves God Most High above all other things, and he supposes (to himself) that that is so. Therefore, there is a sign and a proof needed lest everyone take pride in an empty boast. So, since property is one of the things loved by man, he is tested with it and it is said: "If thou speak the truth in thy claim of love, sacrifice this one of thy beloved things so that thou may understand the level of thy love for God Most High."

The persons, then, who have learned this secret, are of three classes:

The First Class was the truly righteous, who sacrificed all that they possessed and said: "We give for the love of God Most High."

Others gave half of their possessions. When Abu Bakr⁴⁵⁶ (R) brought all of his wealth, the Messenger (S) said: "What hast thou left for thy family?" He answered: "God and the Messenger of God." 'Umar (R) brought half of his wealth. The Messenger (S) asked: "What hast thou left for thy family?" He said: "As much as I have brought." The Messenger (S) said: "*The difference between you two is like the difference between your words.*"

The Second Class was the benevolent who did not spend all of their wealth at one time, as they did not have the power to do so. They kept their (property) and waited for the need of the poor and the payments of charity. They kept themselves the same as the poor. They did not stint in the amount of the poor rate, but when they came upon the poor, they treated them as though they were their own family.

The Third Class was that of the good, sound men who did not have the ability to pay more than five dirhams out of 200 dirhams. They contented themselves with their religious obligation and observed the command of God joyfully and promptly. They did not humble the poor when distributing the poor rate alms. This is the lowest degree, for anyone whose soul (*dil*) does not permit him to give five dirhams out of the two hundred which God gave to him, has no part in the love for God. Since he cannot give more than this, his love is very weak and he is counted among the miserly devotees.

THE SECOND SECRET is the purification of the soul from its miserliness and pollution. Miserliness in the soul is like a religious impurity that causes it to be unsuitable for approaching God Most High, just as an external impurity causes the body to be unsuitable for the presence of prayer. This impurity of miserliness will not be cleansed except by spending wealth. Because of this, the poor rate removes the impurity of miserliness as water washes the (external) impurities. And, it is for this reason that the poor rate and voluntary alms are forbidden to the Messenger (S) and his household, in order to protect his position from the dirt of the peoples' property.

THE THIRD SECRET is that the gratitude for the blessing that property is a blessing for the believers, the cause of their ease in this world and the next. Just as formal prayer, the Pilgrimage, and fasting are the gratitude for the blessings of the body, the poor rate is the gratitude for the blessing of property, so that when one finds himself self-sufficient with these blessings, and sees another Muslim, like himself, in need, he says to himself: "He is a servant of God Most High like me. I am

⁴⁵⁶ Abū Bakr: The first of the Rightly Guided caliphs, rgd. from AH11/632CE to AH13/634CE. He was the father of 'Ayishah (see Note 393). He was the only one of the four Rightly Guided caliphs to die a natural death.

thankful that He has made me unneedful of him and made him needful of me. Let me befriend him. It may be that this is a test; if I stint, I may be changed into his condition, and he into mine.”

Therefore, everyone must know these secrets of the poor rate so that his poor rate not be an empty form.

THE RULES AND DETAILS OF GIVING THE POOR RATE

If a person desires that his worship be living and not spiritless, and that his spiritual reward be multiplied, then he must observe seven duties:

THE FIRST DUTY: This is to hasten in giving the poor rate, before it falls due, by giving it throughout the year. In this, there are three benefits:

One is that the eagerness to worship may appear (in the donor), for giving after it is obligatory is a necessity, because if one does not give, he will be chastised (in the Hereafter). Therefore, that payment will be made out of fear, not out of love. There will be with him that which comes from fear, not from love and compassion.

The second is that happiness may touch the souls of the poor early so that they supplicate for one with more sincerity because they see the happiness unexpectedly. And the supplications of the poor are a walled fortress against all calamities (for the donor).

The third is that one may be secure from the impediments of fortune, for there are many calamities in delaying. It may be that some impediment befall him, depriving him of this benefit.⁴⁵⁷ When the soul conceives an eagerness for something, one should seize the opportunity, for that is the view of mercy. Be quick, lest Satan attack! *For the heart of the believer is between two fingers of the fingers of the Compassionate One.*

The thought occurred to one of the saints, while in the privy, to give his shirt to some poor person. He called his disciple, took off his shirt, and gave it to him. The disciple said: “O shaykh! Why didst thou not wait until thou camest out (of the privy)?” He replied: “I was afraid that some other impulse would occur to me and prevent me from doing this.”

THE SECOND DUTY: If one wishes to pay the poor rate in one lump sum, one should give it either in the month of Muharram⁴⁵⁸ which

⁴⁵⁷ By making him unable to pay the poor rate and obtain its spiritual reward.

⁴⁵⁸ Muharram is the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar. The lunar year gains about ten or eleven days on the solar year every year, so the dates vary. In the year 2001CE, for example, Muharram AH1422 began on the 26th of March. Twelve years earlier, in 1989CE, it began on the 2nd of August.

is the first of the year and a sacred month, or in the month of Ramadan.⁴⁵⁹ However much the occasion is nobler, so the spiritual reward is increased. The Messenger (S) was the most generous of mankind; he gave away whatever he had. At the month Ramadan, he did not keep back anything and gave all of it away.

THE THIRD DUTY: The poor rate should be given privately and not in public in order to avoid hypocrisy. In the Traditions, it is related: "Secret almsgiving quells the wrath of God Most High." In another Tradition: "Seven persons will be in the shade of the Throne of God tomorrow: one is the just ruler, another is the person gives alms with the right hand, giving in such a way that the left hand does not know of it."⁴⁶⁰ See what his status is; that he is at the level of the just ruler!"

And in the Traditions, it is related: "Whoever gives alms in secret, (the alms) are written among the secret deeds; if they are given in public, then they are written among the public deeds. If the donor says to another: 'I gave such-and-such alms,' then the deed is taken out of the records of secret and public deeds and written in the record of hypocrisy."

For this reason the forefathers surpassed themselves in giving alms in secret to the point that there was one who would seek out a blind person and place the alms in his hand without speaking, lest the blind person recognize his voice. Another would look for a sleeping pauper and tie the alms to the man's clothing so that he would find them when he awoke and not know who had given them to him. There was another who threw them in the path the poor were taking. Another would give the alms to a representative who would then distribute them.

All this they did so that the poor would not know (their benefactor)! Yet, they considered keeping their deeds secret from others even more important, for giving in public may lead to hypocrisy; even as miserliness is defeated⁴⁶¹ in the soul, hypocrisy is nourished. These traits are all destroyers. Miserliness is as a scorpion in the grave and hypocrisy is as a snake, which is stronger because they make the scorpion the food of the snake in order to strengthen the snake. One is saved from one destructive force to fall into another that is more difficult. The bite of this on the soul, when in the grave, will be as the bites of snakes and

⁴⁵⁹ Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and the month of fasting. See previous Note.

⁴⁶⁰ Compare these words attributed to Jesus: "But when thou givest alms, let not thy left hand know what the right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Matthew 6:3.

⁴⁶¹ The remedy for miserliness is to give things away. See above.

scorpions, as we found in the Prolegomena.⁴⁶² Therefore, the harm of giving (alms) in public is greater than its benefit.

THE FOURTH DUTY: (For one who) is secure from hypocrisy, and has cleansed it from his soul—such a person knows that if he gives in public, others will imitate him and their desire (to give) will increase—for such a person, giving in public is better and more virtuous. This person must be one to whom praise and censure are equal, one who is proficient in the knowledge of God Most High.

THE FIFTH DUTY: That is that one not invalidate the charity with obligation or troubling. *God Most High said: Do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury.* (Q. 2:264) This refers to injuring the poor with sour looks, knitting the brows, or speaking harshly to them, questioning them rudely, and looking upon them with contempt because of their poverty. This (attitude) arises from two kinds of ignorance and foolishness:

One is that it is hard for some to give up property. For this reason, they are stingy and speak roughly. Whoever finds it difficult to give one dirham to receive a thousand is ignorant. By (giving) this poor rate, he will obtain the highest heaven and the pleasure of God Most High and redeem himself from hell. Why is this difficult for him if he believes in these things?

The other is the foolishness that a person suppose he is nobler than the pauper is because of his wealth. He does not know that a person (the pauper) who will go to heaven five hundred years before he does is nobler than he and his status much greater! To God Most High, the poor have dignity and nobility, not the rich! The sign of their nobility in this world is that while the rich man busies himself with work, worldly concerns, and their burdens and calamities, his portion of such things is not greater than the amount of his need, and it is incumbent upon him to supply the needs of the poor! So, in truth, the rich man has been made the forced laborer of the poor man in this world, and in the next, the poor have been allotted five hundred years to await (the rich man's) arrival!

THE SIXTH DUTY: This is not to impose an obligation. The root of obligation is ignorance, and that is an attribute of the soul. It is to do some good deed for the poor and given them something from his own blessings, and (thus) to put the poor under his control. Then, if he thinks this way, its sign is that he expects the poor person to serve him and wait upon him, and to greet him first. In sum, he expects much respect and deference. If the poor person is deficient in this, he is more amazed at

⁴⁶² See the Fourth Topic of the Prolegomena.

this than he was before. It may be that he says: "What (wrong) have I done to him?"

All of this is from ignorance. Indeed, the truth is that the pauper did him a service by accepting his alms so that he may escape the fire of hell and his soul be cleansed of the impurity of miserliness. If a cupper⁴⁶³ cups him without payment, he would be put under an obligation to (the cupper), for he let out that blood which could have been the cause of his death. Since he has received both purification and salvation because of the poor person, he should put himself under obligation to him!

Also, the Messenger (S) says: "Alms first fall into the hand of God Most High; then, into the hand of the poor person." Since one gives to God Most High and the pauper is the representative of God Most High on His behalf, (the giver) must feel grateful to the poor person, and not expect gratitude from him. When one becomes informed of these three inner secrets of the secrets of the poor rate and reflects upon them, one knows that the imposition of an obligation is ignorance.

The forefathers went to great lengths to avoid doing this. They stood before the poor person and placed it before him humbly. Then they begged him, saying: "Accept this from me." There are some who held it in front of them in their hands so that the pauper would take the coin from their hands. Thus, the pauper's hand was above theirs, for *the upper hand is better than the lower hand*. It is not fitting for a person to impose an obligation.

'Ayishah (R and Umm Salamah⁴⁶⁴ (R) would send something to a poor person, and would say: "Memorize what supplication he utters"; so that they could give a reward⁴⁶⁵ of a supplication for every supplication, this so that the alms would remain unrewarded.⁴⁶⁶ Nor did

⁴⁶³ See Note 300 above.

⁴⁶⁴ Umm Salamah: A wife of the Prophet. She and her first husband, Abu Salamah, were early converts to Islam and emigrated to Ethiopia due to the persecution by the Quraysh. There they had a son, whom they named Salamah. Then, they left Ethiopia and emigrated to Madinah where they had three more children. Her journey alone from Makkah to Madinah with her small child is well known. A non-believer, 'Uthman bin Talhah, happened to meet her on the road and, thinking that a woman should not travel alone such a long distance, escorted her courteously to Madinah. Abu Salamah was wounded at the battle of Uhud and later died in AH4/624CE. The Prophet was 57 years old when he contracted this marriage with the widow.

⁴⁶⁵ "reward": the text has *mukāfāt*, which in modern Persian usually implies retaliation and retribution; quid pro quo. In Arabic, however, and Ghazzali seems to be using it in the Arabic sense, it means 'reward, gratification.'

⁴⁶⁶ That is, the supplication (*du'ā*) of the poor person on their behalf would have nullified the spiritual reward of the charity, so they would ask the person charged to distribute the charity to memorize the words of supplication that the receiver would utter. Then they would supplicate on his behalf to balance that so that the charity would remain untainted by an expression of gratitude from the receiver. The poor man's supplication on their behalf was occasioned by receiving the alms; in the view of 'Ayishah and Umm Salamah

they not hold the eagerness for supplication by the poor man proper so that he suppose that they had done the good deed (for that). The doer of the good deed is in fact the pauper who has taken this burden from thee.

THE SEVENTH DUTY: One should give from the best, most lawful, and most appealing part of one's property; for, that which is doubtful is not fit for nearness (to God). God Most High is pure and does not accept anything other than the pure. *God Most High said: And seek not of the bad to spend thereof (in charity) when ye would not take it for yourselves, save with disdain.* (Q. 2:267) That is: Why do ye spend as the portion of God Most High that thing which ye would accept with repugnance? If a person places the worst he has in his home before the poor man, he slights him. How can it be that one gives the worst to his Lord and the best to His servants?⁴⁶⁷ The worst kind of giving is to give with aversion. Alms given without joy, it is feared, will not be accepted. The Messenger (S) says: "In almsgiving, it is possible for one dirham to take precedence over a thousand dirhams." It is that which is given of the best and given with joy.

THE RULES FOR SEEKING OUT A POOR PERSON

Know that when one gives the alms of the poor rate to any poor Muslim, he is fulfilling a religious obligation; but a person who is doing the business of the Hereafter should not stint in making the effort (to find a suitable recipient). The spiritual reward for the properly distributed charity is multiplied, so one should watch for (at least) one of these five characteristics:

THE FIRST CHARACTERISTIC: The one who is abstinent and pious. *The Prophet (S) said: "Feed the pious."* The reason for this is that they are aided by what they receive in their devotion to God, and the donor is a partner in the spiritual reward of that (devotion) which he has aided.

A great and wealthy person would not give alms except to the Sufis. He used to say: "These are a people who have no ambition other than God Most High. When they are in need of something, they are distracted (from Him). And I, when I take my soul to the Divine Presence, I would prefer (them) to the attention of a hundred souls whose ambition is the world." These words were related to Junayd⁴⁶⁸ who said:

his doing this was a kind of tacit obligation upon them which they remedied by supplicating on his behalf.

⁴⁶⁷ "His servants": i.e., mankind, the people he would seek to impress.

⁴⁶⁸ Junayd: Abu al-Qasim bin Muhammad bin al-Junayd. He came from Nahavand in western Iran and began his career as a silk spinner. He went to Baghdad and became a

"This is the speech of one of God's saints." The man was a grocer and he had become penniless, because he had given away everything that he possessed. He would give the Sufis whatever they asked and not seek payment. Junayd sent the man some goods so that he might return to his trade, saying: "For a man such as thee, trade has no loss."

THE SECOND CHARACTERISTIC: The one who is one of the learned. He obtains the leisure to study by means of the alms. The giver shares the spiritual reward of knowledge.

THE THIRD CHARACTERISTIC: The one who conceals his need. He hides his own poverty and lives with the appearance of affluence: *The ignorant think (they are) rich because of their restraint.* (Q. 2:273) These are a people who keep the veil of the appearance of prosperity over their faces. It is not as though thou give to a pauper who is not afraid to beg.

THE FOURTH CHARACTERISTIC: The one who has a family or is ill. However much the need be greater, the greater is the spiritual reward (of giving to him).

THE FIFTH CHARACTERISTIC: The one who is a relative; (giving to him) is both a present and alms, and the person who is held as a brother in the love of God Most High—he, too, is of the degree of the relatives.

If one finds a person possessing all of these qualities—or more—he takes precedence. When one bestows upon such persons, their high desires and thoughts and their supplications become one's fortress. This is a benefit beyond that which is the expulsion of miserliness from oneself and the giving of thanks for one's blessings. And one must not give the poor rate to 'Alawis,⁴⁶⁹ nor to unbelievers, for this is soiling the people's wealth. The 'Alawi is vexed by this and (giving) this [charity]⁴⁷⁰ to an unbeliever is repugnant.

THE RULES FOR THE RECIPIENT OF THE POOR RATE

The recipient of the alms must observe five duties:

THE FIRST DUTY: He must know that since God Most High created His servants in need of goods, for that reason He did not place a great deal of property in their hands. However, He favored a group and protected from the activities and concerns of the world. He placed the burden of the pain and trouble of the business of the world and its

famous Sufi theologian and jurist. He performed the Pilgrimage thirty times and died in AH297/910CE.

⁴⁶⁹ 'Alawis ('*Alawīyān*): that is, descendants of the Prophet. The poor rate is not given to descendants of the Prophet.

⁴⁷⁰ From the AA text.

preservation upon the powerful. He commanded them to care for those of His more beloved servants according to their needs, so that those precious ones could escape the burden of the world and might be of one mind and thought in their devotion to God Most High.

Since by reason of (physical) needs they would become distracted, in accordance with their needs, they are supplied by the powerful so that the blessedness of their supplications and resolution may be an atonement for the powerful. Consequently, the poor person must receive that which he receives with the intention of using it for his self-sufficiency so that he may be free for devotion (to God). He must recognize the value of the blessing which the powerful have given him as a kind of impressment fee, so that he attend to worship.

This is just as the kings of the world, not wanting their own personal (male) servants⁴⁷¹ to absent themselves from their service, do not permit them to engage in any worldly trade. They turn the villagers and the traders of the marketplace who are not fit to be their servants into their *corvée*⁴⁷² so that they (the kings) may receive from them the tolls and taxes imposed upon their activities and pay their personal servants. As the aim of the property (taken) from all is its use by a special class, the aim of God Most High from all mankind is the worship of the Divine Presence.

For this reason, He said: *I did not create jinn and mankind except that they worship (Me)*. (Q. 51:56) So, the poor person must accept everything he receives with this intention. For this the Messenger (S) said: "The wage of the giver is not greater than the wage of the taker, for (the recipient) takes out of need." This is the person whose purpose is the freedom from care for religion.

THE SECOND DUTY: The recipient receives it as from God most High and views it as from Him. He recognizes the wealthy donor as one utilized (by God) on his behalf, one who has been compelled to deliver it to him by means of (His) agent. His agent is the belief that has been given to him so that he might know that his salvation and happiness are bound up in (giving) charity. If he did not have this agent, he would not give a single grain to anyone. Therefore, (the recipient) should be grateful to Him who has obliged the agent. As (the recipient) knows that the hand of the rich giver is a means, he must view him as the medium and give thanks: *Whoever does not thank people has not thanked God*. For God Most High, as He is the Creator of the deeds of His servants,

⁴⁷¹ "servants" (*ghulāmān*): or "bondmen, slaves." This term only refers to males, usually young. In Arabic, it means "boy, youth, slave, servant." The root *gh, l, m* can also have sexual overtones.

⁴⁷² "corvée" (*sukhrah*): "forced labor, unpaid labor." The kings do not pay their subjects; rather, they levy taxes and fees upon them in order to support their rule over them.

always lauds them and thanks them, just as He said: *How excellent a servant he was; lo! he was ever turning (to Us) (Q. 38:44)*⁴⁷³ And He said: *Surely he was a truthful man, a prophet; (Q. 19:41),*⁴⁷⁴ and the like, because whoever has been turned into the means of goodness, has been made dear. As He said: *There is blessedness for him whom I have created for goodness and I have caused goodness to flow on his hands.*

So, one must know the value of His dear ones, and this is the meaning of gratitude. One must make a supplication for him and say: *May God purify thy heart in the hearts of the godly and increase thy work in the works of good deeds; may He bless thy soul amongst the souls of the martyrs.*

In the Traditions, it is related: "Recompense everyone who does a good deed for thee. If thou art unable, then offer supplication to God on his behalf to fulfill the (obligation of) recompense. The perfection of gratitude is to conceal a defect in the alms and not to consider its meagerness as meagerness, nor to think it mean; just as the prerequisite of the giver is that he give, and even if it should be much, he must consider it unworthy and not magnify it.

THE THIRD DUTY: One should not accept anything that is not lawful. One should not accept anything from the property of oppressors. One should be wary of the property of usurers.

THE FOURTH DUTY: One should not accept more than one needs. If one accepts it for a journey, one should not take more than is necessary for one's provisions and lodging. If one is a debtor, he should not accept more than the debt. If it is for his family's sustenance, it should not be more than ten dirhams; one should not accept eleven dirhams, as that one (extra) dirham is unlawful. If there is something in the house of furnishings and clothing in excess (of need), it is not proper to accept the poor rate alms.

THE FIFTH DUTY: If the giver of the poor rate is not knowledgeable about the source of the portion he is giving, (the recipient) should ask: "Is this which thou art giving from the portion of poor or from the portion of the debtors?"⁴⁷⁵ For example, if the recipient is not of that characteristic, and (the donor) gives the amount of the eighth of his poor rate to him, he should not accept it. According to the school of Shafi'i (R), the whole amount cannot be given to one person.

⁴⁷³ In this particular citation from the Quran, the servant referred to is Job.

⁴⁷⁴ This refers to Abraham.

⁴⁷⁵ See the section above in this chapter entitled: "Rules for Seeking Out a Poor Person." The question here is about which category the alms are being given from and whether the recipient is qualified to accept them.

THE MERIT OF GIVING ALMS

The Messenger (S) said: "Give alms, even if all of it is but a date, for that will keep a poor man alive and slay sins as water extinguishes fire." And he said: "Take heed of hell; if it is all (but) half a date, so be it. If thou canst not (give that), then (give) a kind word." And he said: "No Muslim gives alms of what is lawful but that God Most High takes it in His Own gracious Hand. He nurtures it as thou nurtur'st thine own animals until the time that that date becomes as large as Mount Uhud."⁴⁷⁶ And he said: "At the Resurrection everyone will be beneath the shade of his own alms until the time when judgment is made among created beings." And he said: "Almsgiving shuts seventy of the doors of evil." He was asked: "Which alms are more meritorious?" He answered: "Those which thou givest in health, for thou hast the expectation to live on and do not fear poverty; not those thou delayest until thy soul reaches thy throat"⁴⁷⁷ and then say: 'This to this person, that to that person,' for that will belong to that other person,' — whether thou sayest it (in words) or sayest it not (in words)."⁴⁷⁸

Jesus (A) said: "Angels will not come to the house of whoever disappoints a beggar and drives him away from its door for seven days." The Messenger (S) did not delegate tasks to others; rather, he would do them with his own hands. He would give alms to the needy with his own hand, and he would place the water of purification himself at night and keep it covered. And he (S) said: "Whoever clothes a Muslim, (the clothing) is kept by God Most High so that it will become like a cloak on him."

'Ayishah (R) gave fifty thousand dirhams in charity and wore a patched, mended tunic. She did not make a tunic for herself. Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "A man worshipped God for seventy years, then he committed a great sin which voided all of that worship. Then, he passed by a poor man and gave him a round loaf of bread. He was forgiven for his sin and the deeds of seventy years of his obedience were restored to him." Luqman⁴⁷⁹ said to a boy: "Whenever thou committest a sin, give alms."

⁴⁷⁶ Mount Uhud: A small mountain about three miles north of Madinah. It is famous as the site of a battle (AH3/625CE) in which the Muslims, who had disobeyed the orders of the Prophet, were defeated by the Quraysh.

⁴⁷⁷ That is, you are about to die.

⁴⁷⁸ That is, after death it will be someone else's property anyway.

⁴⁷⁹ Luqman: Luqmān al-Hakīm, in the Quran (Q. 31:1-19) one upon whom God had bestowed knowledge. Muslim commentators are not unanimous as to whether he was a prophet or not. Western scholars have often identified him with Aesop, the putative author of a Greek collection of fables and moral tales. Aesop is not a proper name, but means "the Ethiopie," indicating an African origin. Other identifications have been proposed, but *Allāh a'lam*—God knows best. The problem of Luqman is discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective*. The text of the discussion is also

'Abdullah bin 'Umar⁴⁸⁰ used to give large amounts of sugar in alms and would say: "God Most High says: *Ye will not attain piety until ye spend of that which ye love.* (Q. 3:92) And I love sugar." Sufyan Thawri says: "The alms of whoever does not consider himself more in need of the spiritual reward of the alms than the poor person needs the alms are not acceptable." Hasan Basri saw a beautiful girl with a slave dealer and said: "Wilt thou sell her for two dirhams?" The other replied: "No." Hasan said: "Go, for God Most High sells the women of Paradise for two kernels of grain, and they are more beautiful than she." He meant alms.

found in *From Monarchy to Hellenism in The Bible: An Islamic Perspective* series, extracted from the former volume. (See list on p. iv.)

⁴⁸⁰ 'Abdullah bin 'Umar: See Ibn 'Umar.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCERNING FASTING AND ITS RULES

Know that fasting⁴⁸¹ is one of the Pillars of Islam. The Messenger (S) stated that God Most High says: "For every good deed, I compensate tenfold, up to seven hundred,⁴⁸² except the fast which is particular to Me. I shall give the reward for that." And God Most High says: *Verily, the patient will be paid their wages without stint.* (Q. 39:10) The wages of those who are patient with respect to their own carnal appetites do not come under any accounting or valuation; rather, they exceed all limits. And (the Messenger) (S) said: "The odor from the mouth of the one who fasts is more fragrant to God Most High than the scent of musk." And God Most High says: "My servant has abandoned food, drink, and his own carnal appetite for Me, especially, and I am able to give him his compensation." And (the Messenger) (S) said: "The sleep of the faster is worship." And he said: "When the moon of Ramadan appears, the gates of heaven are flung open, the gates of hell are shut fast, and the devils are bound with chains. A herald cries: 'O seeker of goodness, come, for this is thy moment! O seeker of evil, desist, for this is not thy place.'"

Among the greatness of the virtues (of fasting) is that He made this act of worship for Himself and said: *The fasting is for Me and I shall reward him, even* though all forms of worship are His, just as He calls the Ka'bah His House, even though all of the universe is His kingdom. Fasting has two special qualities that make it deserving of this relationship:

One is that its true nature is in not-doing (something) and refraining (from something). This is internal and hidden from eyes. There can be no hypocrisy in it, for the intention is made at night.

The other is that it is a victory over Iblis,⁴⁸³ the enemy of God Most High, for his armies are the carnal appetites, and fasting defeats his armies, because its true nature is the abandonment of the appetites. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "Satan flows about inside a person as blood does in the body. Thou must make his passage difficult with hunger."

(The Messenger) said to 'Ayishah (R): "Do not cease pounding the gate of heaven." She asked: "With what thing?" He said: "With fasting." That is, with the hunger of fasting. He also said: "*Fasting is a shield.*" All of this is because the carnal appetites are obstacles in acts of

⁴⁸¹ *Rūzah* is the Persian word for fasting. The Arabic is *sawm*.

⁴⁸² "up to seven hundred": AA omits this phrase.

⁴⁸³ Iblis: a name of Satan used in the Quran and Islamic literature (in addition to Satan (*Shayṭān*), which is used in Arabic much as we use "the devil" in English).

worship and the helper of the appetite is satiety, but hunger shatters the appetites.

THE RELIGIOUS OBLIGATIONS OF FASTING

Know that there are six religious obligations with respect to fasting:

THE FIRST OBLIGATION is to seek the first of the month of Ramadan in order that it may be known whether it is to be (a month of) twenty-nine (days) or thirty. Accepting the word (about the sighting of the moon) from one just person is lawful. For the (sighting of the moon of) the Festival,⁴⁸⁴ there should be at least two (just persons). Whoever hears (about it) from some reliable person whom he knows to be truthful becomes obligated to fast, even if a judge has not decided about (the reliability) of (that witness's) word. If (the moon) has been sighted in another city more than of sixteen parasangs⁴⁸⁵ distant, then the fast does not become obligatory;⁴⁸⁶ but if it is nearer, it does.

THE SECOND OBLIGATION is the declaration of the Intention to fast. This must be done every night, and one should declare that this is the fast of Ramadan, a religious obligation, and the timely performance⁴⁸⁷ (of that obligation). The soul of any Muslim who recites this will not be devoid of the Intention.

On the Night of Doubt,⁴⁸⁸ if one says: "I make the intention to fast if tomorrow is the (beginning of) the month of Ramadan," this is not

⁴⁸⁴ "the moon of the Festival": that is, the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast ('*Īd ul-Fitr*) which commences on the first of the month of Shawwal, the tenth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. The festival may last several days, although the special 'Īd congregational formal prayer is held on the first day.

⁴⁸⁵ Parasang: a measure of distance equal to about six kilometers, or approximately four miles. It was originally the distance foot soldiers were expect to travel in one hour over relatively smooth terrain. Sixteen parasangs would be a bit less than 100 kilometers, or a bit more than 60 miles.

⁴⁸⁶ "does not become obligatory": that is, until determined locally. With modern communications, it has become the custom to determine the first day on a national or provincial basis, but there are still places that decide locally.

⁴⁸⁷ "timely performance" (*adā*): That is, the fast—or any other spiritual obligation, such as obligatory prayer—is to be performed at the proper time. This is in opposition to *qadā*, or the delayed or make-up performance of a spiritual obligation because of illness, travel, or some other reason which prevents one from performing it at the correct time. In this case, the fast of Ramadan is being observed during the month of Ramadan, not some other, different time because of unfavorable circumstances.

⁴⁸⁸ The Night of Doubt (*shab-i shakk*): The 31st of the month of Sha'ban, the month that precedes Ramadan. In the Islamic lunar calendar, months have either 29 or 30 days. Because the lunar sightings upon which these calendars are calculated are occasionally deficient due to bad weather, dust, etc., it sometimes happens that the moon is not

correct until the time when the doubt is removed by the word of some reliable person. However, on the last day of Ramadan, it is lawful, even if there is doubt. For the reality is that Ramadan has not yet been completed.

If a person is restrained in some dark place and he determines the time by thought and personal decision, and he is confident about that, it is lawful.⁴⁸⁹ If one declares the Intention at night to eat something, the intention is not nullified; indeed, if (a woman) knows that her menstrual discharge will end, she declares the intention and the discharge ends, (her) fast is valid.

THE THIRD OBLIGATION is that nothing should enter the interior (of the body) deliberately and on purpose (while fasting); however, cupping, applying kohl to the eyes, inserting a stick in the ear, or cotton in the urethra are not detrimental (to the fast), for the "interior" is a receptacle, such as the nasal cavity, the stomach, the intestines, and the bladder. If something reaches the interior involuntarily such as a fly, the dust of the road, smoke, water from rinsing the mouth splashing against the palate, it does not affect (the fasting), unless the mouth-rinsing is excessive and water goes into the throat. If one absent-mindedly eats something, it does not break the fast. However, if in the morning or evening one should deliberately eat something and then learn that it was after the dawn or before the setting of the sun, the fast must be made up.

THE FOURTH OBLIGATION is that one must not have physical contact⁴⁹⁰ with one's family.⁴⁹¹ If carried to the point where the greater ablution becomes obligatory, the fast is broken. However, if one has forgotten that it was a day of fasting, the fast is not broken. If one has intercourse at night⁴⁹² and performs the greater ablution after the dawn, (the fast) is valid.

THE FIFTH OBLIGATION is to not induce the ejaculation of semen by any means. If one is with one's own family, without the intention of having sexual intercourse, but one is young and in danger of ejaculation, should this occur, the fast is broken.

observed on the 30th night of Sha'ban. The following day may be the 31st of Sha'ban or the first of Ramadan, and there is a doubt about fasting that day.

⁴⁸⁹ That is, the person cannot determine the time for beginning or ending the fast by observing the sun as people normally do.

⁴⁹⁰ "physical contact" (*mubāsharat*): This can mean lying with the skin of one person touching the skin of another, or, euphemistically, sexual intercourse.

⁴⁹¹ Family, people (*ahl*): This is a euphemism for the women of the household. In Ghazzali's time, the term would have included wife or wives, concubines, etc.

⁴⁹² Sexual intercourse, along with eating and drinking are, of course, lawful during the nights of fasting. The strictures against these acts apply only during the daylight hours.

THE SIXTH OBLIGATION is one must not induce vomiting. If one vomits involuntarily, the fast is not broken. If because of a head cold or for some other cause, one expectorates congealed phlegm from the throat, it does not affect the fasting; for avoiding this is difficult, but if, when it reaches the mouth one swallows it back down, the fast is broken.

THE PRACTICES (OF THE PROPHET) ARE ALSO SIX

(These are) delaying the pre-dawn meal and hastening to break the fast with dates or water before the obligatory formal prayer; holding a tooth-brushing stick after the sun begins to decline (in the afternoon); being generous with alms and donations of food; much reading of the Quran; and seclusion⁴⁹³ in the mosque, especially during the last ten days of Ramadan, in which is the Night of Power.⁴⁹⁴ The Messenger (S) during these ten days put away his night garments and girded his loins for worship; he and his family did not rest from worshipping.

The Night of Power is either the twenty-first, twenty-third, twenty-fifth, twenty-seventh, or twenty-ninth night. (The case for) the twenty-seventh is stronger and more probable. Continual seclusion during these ten days is to be preferred. If one has vowed to seclude oneself for a continuous period, it is important that one not leave, except for calls of nature, and not spend a long time in the place to perform lesser ablutions. If one leaves to attend a funeral, to visit a sick person, to give witness, or to renew the purification,⁴⁹⁵ the seclusion is broken off. There is nothing to fear concerning washing the hands, eating, or sleeping in the mosque. Whenever one returns from a call of nature, one has to renew the Intention (to remain in seclusion).

THE INNER SECRET AND TRUE NATURE OF FASTING

Know that for fasting there are three degrees: the fasting of the common folk, the fasting of the select, and the fasting of the elite.

As for the fasting of the common folk, it is that which has been described and its limit is the restraint of the belly and the genitals. This is the lowest of the degrees.

As for the fasting of the elite, it is the loftiest of the degrees. It is to restrain the soul from thought of all things save God Most High. One must give oneself entirely to God and fast from everything—outwardly and inwardly—which is not He. Whatever one thinks about other than the discussion of God Most High and that which is related to Him breaks

⁴⁹³ "seclusion" (*i'tikāf*): Secluding oneself in or retiring to a place of worship for a period of time for devotional purposes.

⁴⁹⁴ See Note 429.

⁴⁹⁵ This means the greater ablution (*ghusl*).

this fast. If one thinks about some worldly matter, even though it be lawful, this fast is nullified, unless if be about something worldly which aids him in the way of religion—in reality, that is not worldly—to the point that they would say: “If one thinks about the arrangements for the food for breaking the fast, the fast is broken and a lapse is recorded for him; for this is proof that he is not certain of the sustenance which God Most High has promised him.” This is the degree of the prophets and the truly righteous; not everyone can attain it.

As for the fasting of the select, it is to restrain all of one’s bodily limbs from impropriety, but is not limited to the stomach and the genitals. The perfection of this fasting lies in six things:

FIRST: To restrain the eye from looking at all things that distract one from God Most High, especially from that thing which arouses one’s carnal appetite. The Messenger (S) says: “A glance is an arrow from among the arrows of Iblis, moistened with poison. Whoever avoids something out of fear of God Most High is given a robe of security, the sweetness of which remains in the soul, and he obtains its delight.” Anas relates that the Messenger (S) said: “Five things break the fast: a lie, slander, talebearing, a false oath, and a lustful glance.”

SECOND: To restrain the tongue from foolish talk and everything that is superfluous. One should remain silent or engage in the recitation of the Quran. Argument and disputatiousness are among the harmful things. As for slander and talebearing, according to the school of some religious scholars, even the fast of the common people is broken by them.

In the Traditions, it is related: “Two women were fasting, so much that they were in danger of dying from hunger. They asked the Messenger (S) for a ruling so that they might break their fasts. He sent them a bowl for them throw up in. From the throat of each of them, some congealed blood was brought up and the people were astonished by this. The Messenger (S) said: ‘These two women have fasted from what God Most High has made lawful and they have broken it with what He has forbidden. They busied themselves with slander and what they brought up from their throats was the flesh of the people they have devoured.’”

THIRD: To restrain the ear from listening to that which is not proper to hear. The listener becomes the partner of the speaker in the sin of lying, slandering, etc.

FOURTH: To restrain the hands, feet, and all the bodily parts from the indecent. Whoever fasts and does such things is like the sick man who abstains from fruit but eats poison. For sin is poison and food is nourishment, harmful when too much is consumed, but in essence it is

not harmful. Concerning this, the Messenger (S) said: "They may fast much, but their portion from the fasting is nothing other than hunger and thirst."

FIFTH: Not to eat anything at the breaking of the fast which is forbidden or doubtful. One should not eat excessively of that which is purely lawful, for whenever one makes up at night for what one has missed during the day, what is achieved? The purpose of fasting is the weakening of carnal appetites. Eating twice as much increases them, especially of diverse foods brought together. Until the stomach is empty, the soul does not become pure. On the contrary, it is the practice of the Prophet that one should not sleep much during the day so that one perceives the effects of weakness and hunger in oneself. If one eats too much at night, one will become sleepy early and omit the night prayer. Because of this the Messenger (S) said: "No filled vessel is more inimical to God Most High than the stomach."

SIXTH: To be apprehensive⁴⁹⁶ after breaking the fast as to whether one's fasting has been accepted or rejected. Hasan Basri passed by some people on the day of the 'Id Festival who were laughing and amusing themselves. He said: "God Most High has created the month of Ramadan (like an athletic) field for His servants to compete with each other in worshipping Him. One team is ahead and another behind. It is amazing that people laugh and have not learned the truth of their own state! By God, if the veil is lifted from affairs, the accepted ones would be engaged in their own happiness and the rejected would mourn in their anxiety. No one would be playing and laughing."

So, from this you learn that the fast of whoever limits his fasting to not eating and not drinking, is a soulless form, for the spirit (*rūḥ*) and true nature of fasting is that one make oneself like the angels, for whom there is absolutely no carnal appetite. The beasts are dominated by their appetite and for this reason they are far from (the angels). Any person dominated by appetite is also at the level of the beasts. When his appetite is decreased, he has begun to take on a resemblance to the angels. For this reason he approaches them—an approach in attributes, not in station—and the angels are near God Most High. Consequently, he also is near (God). When he makes arrangements to attend to supper and gives full aid to what the appetite desires, the appetite grows stronger, not weaker, and the spirit of the fasting is not obtained.

⁴⁹⁶ "apprehensive": literally, "for the soul to be suspended between fear and hope."

THE REQUISITES OF THE BREAKING OF THE FAST

Know that discharge of religious obligations, atonement, expiation, and the observation of the moment the daily fast begins⁴⁹⁷ are obligatory for the breaking of the fast⁴⁹⁸ during Ramadan, but each one in its own place.

As for the discharge of incurred religious obligations, this is obligatory for every responsible Muslim who has to break his fast, with or without an excuse. It is obligatory upon the menstruating woman, the traveler, the sick person, and the pregnant. It is the same for an apostate, too. However, it is not necessary for the insane or children.

As for the atonement, this is not obligatory, except in case of sexual contact or the deliberate ejaculation of semen. The atonement for these things is the freeing of a slave. If one does not have (a slave), then one must fast two consecutive months. If one cannot, for reason of illness or weakness, one must give sixty *mudds*⁴⁹⁹ of food to the poor, each poor person one *mudd*. A *mudd* is a *mann* less one third.

As for the start of the fast, it is obligatory for a person who, without excuse, breaks his fast during the rest of the day (to restart it). However, it is not required for a fasting and menstruating women, if, during the day, she becomes clean, nor is it obligatory for the traveler, even if he becomes a resident, or the sick person, even if he becomes well.

On the Day of Doubt,⁵⁰⁰ if one person testifies that he has seen the moon, whoever has (already) eaten must leave off eating and fast for the rest of the day. Whoever commences a journey at midday should not break his fast; if he arrives at a city at midday, it is not proper to break the fast. Fasting is to be preferred for travelers over breaking the fast, unless they do not have the strength (to fast).

As for the expiation,⁵⁰¹ it is a *mudd* of food given to a needy person. Pregnant and nursing (women) must make up the fast and pay the expiation, as when a fast is broken for fear of (harming the welfare of) the child, or as sick person does out of fear for his own (welfare). An old person who cannot fast because of weakness must also pay this expiation in place of making it up. Whoever delays making up the fast of the

⁴⁹⁷ "the moment the daily fast begins" (*imsāh*): literally, "keeping back, holding, detaining." It is the same time as that of the obligatory pre-dawn prayer (*fajr*).

⁴⁹⁸ "breaking of the fast": *iftār*.

⁴⁹⁹ *mudd*: a dry measure equal to either two or one and one-third *ratls*; or about as much as the spread-out hands of a fully-grown man can hold. (Steingass)

⁵⁰⁰ The Day of Doubt: the reference is to the day following the Night of Doubt earlier. Remember that the day commences at sunset. See Note 488.

⁵⁰¹ "expiation" (*fidyah*): *fidyah* also means "ransom."

month of Ramadan until the next Ramadan comes must (give) a *mudd* of food for every day to be made up.

EXCURSUS: [FASTING ON THE NOBLE AND MERITORIOUS DAYS]⁵⁰²

Fasting on the Noble and Meritorious Days is a Practice of the Prophet. Those which occur during the year are: the Day of 'Arafah,⁵⁰³ the Tenth of Muharram,⁵⁰⁴ the first nine days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah,⁵⁰⁵ and the first ten days of the months of Muharram, Rajab, and Sha'ban.⁵⁰⁶

It is related in the Traditions that the most meritorious fasting after that of the month of Ramadan is fasting in the month of Muharram. It is a Practice of the Prophet to fast the entire month of Muharram, but (the report of the practice of fasting) the first ten days is more definite. And it is related in the Traditions: "Whoever fasts on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in the sacred months, the worship of seven hundred years is credited to him." The sacred months are four: Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram, and Rajab. The most meritorious of them is the month of Dhul-Hijjah, which is the time of the Pilgrimage. And in the Traditions: "Worship is at no time more meritorious and more beloved by God Most High than in the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah. The fasting of one of these days is like the fasting of a year. The standing⁵⁰⁷ of one of its nights is like the standing on the Night of Power." They asked: "O Messenger of God! Not the earnest striving (in defence of Islam), too?" He said: "Not the earnest striving too, except for a person whose horse is killed and his blood is shed during the striving."

Some of the Companions did not like to fast the entire month of Rajab lest it become the equal of Ramadan. For this reason they broke the fast for one day, or more. In the Traditions it is related: "From the middle of Sha'ban, there is no fasting until the month of Ramadan." In all, not fasting at the end of Sha'ban is good so that Ramadan may be separated from it. However, it is disliked to fast at the end of Sha'ban by

⁵⁰² From the AA text.

⁵⁰³ The Day of 'Arafah: The climax of the Greater Pilgrimage where all the pilgrims assemble and stand ready in obedience to the command of God. It takes place on the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah.

⁵⁰⁴ The Tenth of Muharram ('Āshūrā): This day commemorates the tragedy of Karbala, when in AH61/680CE the grandson of the Prophet, Husayn, was brutally slain. He had been challenging the legitimacy of the Umayyad caliphate.

⁵⁰⁵ This is in association with the Greater Pilgrimage.

⁵⁰⁶ See the list of Islamic months in the Translator's Preface in the introductory material at the beginning of this volume for their sequence and relation to one another.

⁵⁰⁷ "standing" (*qiyām*): staying awake throughout the night engaged in religious activities such as formal prayer, remembrance of God, meditation, etc.

way of welcoming the advent of Ramadan, unless there is some other reason other than the welcoming.

AS FOR THE NOBLE DAYS OF THE MONTH, they are the "bright" days: the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth.⁵⁰⁸ In the week, they are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. However, continuous fasting throughout the year would include all of these, but there are five days on which one must not fast: the two Festival days and the three days following the Festival of the Sacrifice. One must not refuse to break the fast, for that is disliked. Whoever cannot fast throughout the year may fast on alternate days; this was the fasting of David (A) and its merit is great.

In the Traditions, it is related that 'Abdullah bin 'Amr al-'As⁵⁰⁹ (R) asked the Messenger (S) about the most meritorious days and the manner of fasting. He described (the fast of David (A)) to him. ('Abdullah) said: "I want something more meritorious." (The Messenger) replied: "There is nothing more meritorious than this." At a lower level than this is fasting on Thursdays and Mondays which, with the month of Ramadan, would equal a third of the year.

When a person understands the true nature of fasting—that its purpose is the decrease of carnal appetite and the purification of the soul—he must always be watchful of his soul. If this is done, some times breaking a fast will be more meritorious; other times, keeping the fast. It was for this reason that the Messenger (S) some times fasted to such an extent that they said: "Will he never break his fast?" At other times he would not fast and they would say: "Will he never fast?" The pattern of his fasting was not discernible.

The religious scholars disliked not fasting more than four days in a row. They counted the Festival of the Sacrifice together with the following three days as four days for the reason that they feared continual non-fasting would blacken the soul, indifference would triumph, and the awareness and wakefulness of the soul grow weak.

⁵⁰⁸ The "bright" days (*ayyām-i bayḍ*): the "brightness" refers to the fullness of the moon on those days during the lunar month.

⁵⁰⁹ 'Abdullah bin 'Amr al-'As: A Companion of the Prophet. He was with the Prophet at the battle of Hunayn in AH/630CE after the conquest of Makkah. In *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabir*, Ibn Sa'd quotes a tradition that 'Abdullah kept a notebook containing everything he heard from the Apostle of God.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCERNING THE GREATER PILGRIMAGE

Know that the Greater Pilgrimage is one of the Pillars of Islam and the worship of a lifetime. The Messenger (S) said: "Of anyone who dies without having made the Greater Pilgrimage, say: '(It is as if he had desired to) die either as a Jew or a Christian!'" And he said: "Whoever performs the Greater Pilgrimage without polluting his body with corruption and whose tongue does not engage in foolish and improper speech sheds all of his sins and is as though he had been born from his mother on that day." He also said: "There are many sins which cannot be atoned for except by standing at 'Arafat." And he said: "Satan is not seen more humbled, more wretched, and more bilious on any day other than on the Day of 'Arafah⁵¹⁰ because of the mercy of God Most High which pours down upon the people so liberally and because of the great number of mortal sins which are forgiven."

And he said: "Whoever leaves his house intending to perform the Pilgrimage and dies along the way is credited with the performance of the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages every year until the Day of Resurrection. Whoever dies in Makkah or in Madinah has neither the presentation (of deeds) nor an accounting." And he said: "One Pilgrimage accepted (by God) is better than the world and all that it contains. The pilgrim is rewarded with nothing less than Paradise." And he said: "There is no greater sin than for someone to stand in 'Arafah and think that he is not forgiven."

'Ali bin Muwaffaq⁵¹¹ was one of the great ones.⁵¹² He said: "One year I performed the Pilgrimage. On the eve of 'Arafah, I saw in a dream two angels wearing green clothes who had descended from heaven. One said to the other: 'Dost thou know how many people have been at this year's Pilgrimage?' The other said: 'No.' He said: 'Six hundred thousand.' The other asked: 'Dost thou know how many had their Pilgrimage accepted?' He answered: 'No.' The first said: 'The Pilgrimage of six persons was accepted.' I woke up in terror and was very worried by these words. I said: 'In no way shall I be one of those six.' Thinking and worrying about this, I arrived at the station of Muzdalifah⁵¹³ and went to sleep. Once again, I saw those two angels who had been talking together. Then, one of them said to the other: 'Knowest

⁵¹⁰ See Note 503.

⁵¹¹ Ali bin Muwaffaq: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

⁵¹² "the great ones" (*buzurgān*) or "saints."

⁵¹³ Muzdalifah (*mash'ar al-ḥarām*): A camping place for the Pilgrims between Makkah and 'Arafat.

thou what God Most High has decreed this night amongst the people?" The other answered: 'No.' He said: 'He has granted to each of those six persons one hundred thousand persons.⁵¹⁴ All for the deeds of those six!' Then, I woke up joyfully and thanked God!"

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High has promised that every year six hundred thousand of His servants will make the Greater Pilgrimage to this House. If there are fewer than that number, a number of the angels are sent to complete this number. They throng around the Ka'bah as though it were a bride that will be presented (to her husband). Every one who has performed the Greater Pilgrimage goes around it and touches its curtains⁵¹⁵ so that when it is in heaven they will be with it in heaven."

THE CONDITIONS FOR THE PILGRIMAGE

Know that every Muslim who performs the Pilgrimage during its proper time is correct. Its time is Shawwal, Dhul-Qa'dah, and the nine days of Dhul-Hijjah⁵¹⁶ until the dawning of the morning of the tenth day, the Day of the Festival. The Consecration⁵¹⁷ during this period, for the Greater Pilgrimage, is valid. If one adopts the Consecration before this, it is the Lesser Pilgrimage.⁵¹⁸ The Pilgrimage of a rational child is valid, and that of the nursing child, if his guardian makes the Consecration for the child and carries him to 'Arafat. If he carries the child during the Running and the Circumambulation, it is valid. Thus, the prerequisites for the validity of the Pilgrimage are nothing more than being a Muslim and performing it at the proper time.

However, the conditions for it to be considered the Greater Pilgrimage of Islam and the fulfillment of the religious obligation are five: being a Muslim, free, of age,⁵¹⁹ rational, and then consecrated at the proper time. If it is a child who is consecrated and he reaches puberty before the Standing at 'Arafah, or a slave who becomes a freeman before

⁵¹⁴ That is, the six whose Pilgrimage had been accepted would cause the acceptance of the Pilgrimages of 100,000 Pilgrims each. In other words, because of the virtues of the six, all of the Pilgrimages would be accepted by God Most High.

⁵¹⁵ "curtains" (*pardah-hā*): a reference to the brocade "robe" (Ar. *kiswah*) which is hung about the Ka'bah and renewed each year.

⁵¹⁶ See calendar in the Translator's Preface.

⁵¹⁷ "the Consecration": *ihrām*.

⁵¹⁸ The Lesser Pilgrimage (*Umrah*) is less meritorious than the Greater Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) which is performed only during the appointed days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah. The Lesser Pilgrimage can be performed at any time during the year except the 8th, 9th, and 10th of Dhul-Hijjah, which are the days of the Greater Pilgrimage. The performance of both Pilgrimages together on a single visit to Makkah is called the Combined Pilgrimage (*Hajj-i Qirān*)

⁵¹⁹ "of age": having achieved puberty (*bāligh*).

that, he becomes eligible for the Greater Pilgrimage of Islam. These same conditions apply to the religious duty of the Lesser Pilgrimage, except with respect to time, for the entire year is the time of the Lesser Pilgrimage.

As for the condition for the person performing the Greater Pilgrimage on behalf of someone else, it is that he must have previously performed a Greater Pilgrimage for himself. If he declares the Intention for the other person before (performing the Greater Pilgrimage) for himself, then it is credited to him, not to the other person. First is the Greater Pilgrimage of Islam, then the make-up (Pilgrimage), then (the Greater Pilgrimage performed for) a vow, then (the Greater Pilgrimage) on behalf of someone else, in that order, even if the declared Intention is different from this.

As for the prerequisites for the necessity of making the Greater Pilgrimage, they are: Islam, puberty, rationality, freedom, and ability. The ability is of two kinds:

THE FIRST is that one be able to perform the Greater Pilgrimage oneself. There are four requirements for this: (1) one must be healthy; (2) the road must be safe: there must be no dangerous sea or enemy of whom one would fear for property and life; (3) one must have sufficient funds for the expenses of the journey and the return home and for the expenses of the family (at home) until that return, and one must have paid all outstanding debts; and (4) one should have an animal so that it would not be necessary to walk.

AS FOR THE OTHER KIND, it is if one is not able to go oneself as when one is paralyzed or immobile and there is not hope for improvement, except rarely. His ability lies in that he has sufficient wealth to send a deputy to perform the Pilgrimage on his behalf and to compensate that person for it. If one's son undertakes to perform the Greater Pilgrimage on one's behalf without compensation, then it becomes incumbent upon (the father) to give him some perquisite, because service to one's father is an honor. If he says: "I shall give money so that thou may hire someone," it is not necessary (for the son) to accept (the money) as a favor.⁵²⁰

When the ability has been acquired, one should hasten. If one delays, it is lawful if one finds the grace to perform it the next year. If one delays and then dies before accomplishing the Greater Pilgrimage,

⁵²⁰ That is, serving one's father is a great honor and the son undertakes it freely. However, the father should press some money upon his son in lieu of payment, saying that it is for the hire of a servant. That way, the integrity of the honor being shown by the son is not impaired.

he is in rebellion (against God) and someone, using funds from the estate, should perform a Greater Pilgrimage on behalf of the dead person, even though he has not made a will to that effect, for this is a debt that (the deceased) has incurred.

‘Umar (R) said: “I thought about writing (a decree) that the tax on non-Muslims⁵²¹ should be collected from anyone in the cities who has the ability to perform the Greater Pilgrimage and does not do so.”

THE ESSENTIALS, OBLIGATIONS, AND TYPES OF PILGRIMAGE AND ITS RESTRICTIONS

Know that these essentials, without which the Pilgrimage is not valid, are five: Consecration, Circumambulation, then, after that the Running, the Standing at ‘Arafah, and the Shaving of the Head, according to one report.

The obligations which, if omitted, do not nullify the Pilgrimage—though sacrificing a sheep is necessary—are six: (1) consecrating oneself at the Stations⁵²²—if one progresses beyond them (towards Makkah), a sheep should be given, (2) the stoning, (3) waiting patiently at ‘Arafat until the setting of the sun, (4) stopping at Muzdalifah during the night, and (5) the same at Mina, and (6) the Circumambulation of Farewell. About the last four there is something else to be said: if one omits them, it is not necessary to offer a sheep, but it is the practice of the Prophet to do so.

As for the types of Pilgrimage, there are three: separate,⁵²³ combined,⁵²⁴ and reaping advantage.⁵²⁵

THE “SEPARATE” is to be preferred, for the Greater Pilgrimage was first performed by itself. When this is completed, one leaves the state of consecration and assumes the consecration for the Lesser Pilgrimage. Then, one performs that. The consecration for the Lesser Pilgrimage is better at Ja‘ranah, which is better than Tan‘im, which is

⁵²¹ The tax on non-Muslims (*jizyah*): A poll tax collected from free non-Muslims in lieu of the military service to which Muslims were subject.

⁵²² “the Stations”: *miqāt*.

⁵²³ “separate” (*ifrād*): this is to perform the Greater Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) first and the Lesser Pilgrimage (*‘Umrah*) afterwards.

⁵²⁴ “combined” (*qirān*): this is to perform the Intention for both the Greater Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) and Lesser Pilgrimage (*‘Umrah*) without an interval of the relinquishment of the state of Consecration (*ihrām*) between them.

⁵²⁵ “reaping advantage” (*tamattu‘*): this is to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage (*‘Umrah*) first and the Greater Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) afterwards.

better than Hudaybiyah.⁵²⁶ All of these places are in accordance with the practice of the Prophet.

AS FOR THE "COMBINED" GREATER PILGRIMAGE, it is that one declares: "*I obey Thee in the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages*," so that one consecrates oneself for both at the same time and perform the rites of the Greater Pilgrimage only, the Lesser Pilgrimage being subsumed in it as the lesser ablution is subsumed in the greater ablution. Whoever does this must offer a sheep unless he is a resident of Makkah. In that case, it would not be necessary, for the station of Consecration would be Makkah itself. When performing the combined Greater Pilgrimage, if one performs the Circumambulation (of the Ka'bah) and the Running before the Standing at 'Arafah, the Running will be counted for both the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages, but the Circumambulation must be repeated after the Standing at 'Arafah, for it is a condition of the obligatory circumambulation⁵²⁷ that it be performed after the Standing.

AS FOR "REAPING ADVANTAGE," it is that when one reaches the station of Consecration, one consecrates oneself for the Lesser Pilgrimage and comes out of it in Makkah, so as not be under the restriction of the consecration. Then, at the time of the Greater Pilgrimage one goes to Makkah and consecrates oneself for the Greater Pilgrimage. One must offer a sheep, but if one cannot do so, one must fast three days before the Festival of the Sacrifice, either continuously or on separate days, and one must fast another seven days when one returns to one's homeland. In the combined Greater Pilgrimage, too, if one does not have a sheep, one must fast ten days in the same way.

THE BLOOD-SACRIFICE of the Greater Pilgrimage of reaping advantage becomes obligatory upon a person who has consecrated himself for the Lesser Pilgrimage in Shawwal, Dhul-Qa'dah, or the first ten days of Dhul-Hijjah in order to lessen the hardship of the Pilgrimage. The consecration for the Greater Pilgrimage should be done at one of its own stations. Then, if one is an inhabitant of Makkah or a stranger and comes at the time of the Pilgrimage to a station of consecration and it is a mile away, one must offer a sheep.

AS FOR THE RESTRICTIONS of the Pilgrimage, they are six:

First: Clothing. It is not proper in a consecrated state to wear trousers, turban, and stockings. Rather, a loin wrap, cloak, and sandals are proper. If sandals are not available, shoes are lawful. If a loin wrap is not available, trousers are lawful. Covering the seven members of the

⁵²⁶ Three places where pilgrims consecrate themselves by assuming the characteristic dress of the Pilgrimage.

⁵²⁷ That is, the Farewell Circumambulation.

body⁵²⁸ with the loin wrap is lawful, except for the head, which it is not proper to cover. For a woman, it is lawful to wear her usual clothing, but the face should not be covered. It is lawful for her to be either in a litter or under a parasol.

Second: One should not use perfume. If one does and wears (ordinary) clothing, a sheep must be offered.

Three: One should not shave or pare one's nails. If one does, a sheep must be offered. Going to the bath, bloodletting, cupping, and combing the hair, so long as it is not pulled out, are lawful.

Fourth: One should not engage in sexual intercourse. If one does, one must offer a camel, a cow, or seven sheep and the Pilgrimage becomes corrupted and must be made up. If it is after the first remittance,⁵²⁹ then a camel must be offered, but the Pilgrimage is not ruined.

Fifth: Sexual foreplay such as caressing a woman or kissing is not proper, nor any kind of touching that voids purification. One must offer a sheep. The same is true for masturbation. A consecrated person should not undertake a marriage. If he does, it is not valid and nothing (of the contract) becomes binding.

Sixth: Hunting is not appropriate except (fishing) from water.⁵³⁰ If one hunts and kills an animal, something similar to it must be offered (as sacrifice in atonement): a camel, a cow, or a sheep; whichever best resembles that animal.

THE MANNER OF PERFORMING THE PILGRIMAGE

Know that as one must know the manner of the acts of the Pilgrimage, from the beginning to the end, and in their order—the obligations, the (recommended) Practices of the Prophet, and the rules of conduct mixed together—as is the Practice of the Prophet, because for whomever whose worship is by habit, the Practices of the Prophet, the etiquette, and the obligations are the same, for when one reaches the station of love, one reaches the voluntary and the recommended.⁵³¹ As the Messenger (S) said that God Most High says: “My servants do not

⁵²⁸ The seven members of the body (*haft andām*): the head, breast, belly, hands, and feet; or, the head, hands, sides, and feet.

⁵²⁹ “remittance” (*tahallul*): the release from the restrictions of the Pilgrimage. See below in *The Manner of the Rest of the Acts of the Pilgrimage*.

⁵³⁰ Hunting (*ṣayd*) means both hunting in the usual English sense of hunting animals and also fishing. Hunting animals, while in a consecrated state is disapproved of; however, fishing is permissible.

⁵³¹ The rites and ceremonies of the Greater Pilgrimage are of a specific order, but they are of different categories: some are divinely imposed obligations, some are the Practice of the Prophet, and others are approved civilities. The person who devotes himself to God performs them all without distinction.

draw near to Me in a greater manner than by observing My divine commands. The person who is a servant never rests in drawing near by means of voluntary and recommended practices so that through them I become his hearing, sight, hand, and tongue. He sees Me; he hears Me, he grasps Me, and he speaks to Me."

Therefore, it is important that the rules of conduct and recommended practices of worship be performed and the rules be observed with respect to everything.

THE RULES OF CONDUCT AND PROVISIONS FOR THE JOURNEY

First, (a person) declares the Intention to perform the Greater Pilgrimage. He repents and returns all unlawfully obtained things. He discharges his debts. He gives (sufficient funds for) the expenses for his family, children, and all who are dependent upon him for sustenance (in his absence). He writes a will. He obtains the provisions for the journey by lawful means, taking care to avoid the doubtful; for if one performs the Pilgrimage with doubtful goods and funds, there is a fear that it will not be accepted. He should prepare sufficient provisions so that he may be able to aid the poor on the way.

Before setting out, he should distribute some alms for the safety of the road. He should hire sturdy mules and show all of whatever is being carried to the muleteer so that there be no unpleasantness on the journey.⁵³² He should find a good companion who is (also) traveling to be a helper in religion and the affairs of the trip. He should bid farewell to friends and settle any outstanding matters with them and ask for their supplications. He should say to each one of them: "*I remand thy religion, thy security, and the conclusion of thine affair to God.*" They say to him: "*(Be) in the keeping of God and in His shelter; may God provision thee with piety; may He avert evil from thee; may He forgive thy sin and turn thee to goodness wheresoever thou turnest.*"

When about to come out of the house, he should perform a two-bow formal prayer. In the first bow, he should recited the Opening and the Disbelievers.⁵³³ In the second bow, he should recite the Opening and the Unity.⁵³⁴ After the formal prayer has been completed, he should say:

"O God! Thou art the Master on the journey; Thou art (my) Deputy for my family, property, and children; preserve us and them from every kind of harm. O God! Truly we beseech Thee on this our way for reverence, piety, and acts which may please Thee."

⁵³² That is, to avoid disputes about the weight and bulk of the loads the animals will carry.

⁵³³ The Opening and the Disbelievers: The first and 109th chapters (*sūrah*) of the Quran respectively.

⁵³⁴ The Opening and the Unity: The first and 112th chapters of the Quran respectively.

When he reaches the gate of the residence, he says: "*In the name of God. I trust in God; there is no power and no strength save in God; O God! I have come out with (Thine aid), I have trusted in Thee, I have taken refuge with Thee, and I have turned to Thee. O God! Provision me with piety and forgive me my sins and turn me to goodness wherever I turn.*"

When he has mounted his animal, he says: "*In the name of God and with God, and God is Greater. Praise be to Him Who has subordinated these to us and we were not capable of it. Verily, we are returning to our Lord.*" (Q. 43:13-14)

He should occupy himself during the entire journey with the remembrance of God and the recitation of the Quran. If some hardship confronts him, he should say: "*O God! Thou hast the pre-eminence over all eminences; Thine is the praise in every condition.*" If one be frightened on the journey, one should recite the *Verse of the Throne* (Q. 2:255-6), the *Verse of the Testimony* (Q. 3:17), the *Unity* (Q. 112), and the two *Seeking Refuges* (Q. 113, 114).

THE MANNER OF CONSECRATION AND THE ENTRANCE INTO MAKKAH

Upon reaching a Station of Consecration, where the caravan assumes the state of Consecration, he first performs the greater ablution and trims the hair and nails as we have described for Friday (congregational prayer).⁵³⁵ He takes off sewn clothing and puts on the white loin wrap and cloak. He may perfume himself before the consecration. After mounting (his animal) when preparing to leave, one should prod the camels and turn to the road and—with soul and tongue—declare the Intention to perform the Greater Pilgrimage, and (then) say: "*I am at Thy service, O God! I am at Thy service! Thou hast no partner; I am at Thy service. All praise, blessings, and sovereignty are Thine. Thou hast no partner.*" One repeats these words loudly (again and again), and at every rise and dip and wherever the caravan is buffeted and intermingled with crowds.⁵³⁶

During the Pilgrimage there are nine occasions when the greater ablution is the Practice of the Prophet: the Consecration, the entrance into Makkah, the Circumambulation of the Visit, the Standing at 'Arafat, the Station of Muzdalifah, the three greater ablutions for casting the

⁵³⁵ See Chapter Four above.

⁵³⁶ Most pilgrims travel in "caravans" (*qāfilah*, pl. *qawāfil*) that perform the rites and travels between various points together. Because of the huge numbers, the movements of large masses of people during the Greater Pilgrimage can lead to breaking up of the groups. Shouting to each is one way of maintaining cohesion. Caravan leaders today carry flags or staffs raised high in such situations so that the caravan may regroup.

stones at the three Jamarah, and the Farewell Circumambulation. However, there is no greater ablution for the (later) stoning of the Jamarat al-'Aqabah.

After performing the greater ablution, one enters Makkah and one's eyes fall on the House.⁵³⁷ While one is in the middle of the city, one says: "*There is no god but God; God is Greater (than all else). O God, Thou art Peace and peace is from Thee. Thy House is the House of Peace. Thou art to be praised, O Possessor of Majesty and Noble Generosity! O God, verily, this is Thy House which Thou hast exalted, honored, and ennobled, O God, so increase it in greatness, honor, and nobility. Increase it in awe. Increase the righteousness and high-mindedness of those who make the Greater Pilgrimage to it. O God, open to me the gates of Thy mercy and cause me to enter Thy paradise and protect me from the accursed Satan.*"

Then, one enters the mosque by the Gate of Bani Shaybah and directs one's steps to the Black Stone. One kisses it, but if one is not able to do so because of the crowd, one raises one's hand and says: "*O God, I have performed my trust and I have fulfilled my covenant. Bear witness to my arrival.*"

Then, one performs the Circumambulation and the Running.

THE RULES OF PERFORMING THE CIRCUMAMBULATION

Know that the Circumambulation⁵³⁸ is like obligatory prayer; in it are the (obligations of) purity of the body, clothing, and place, and the covering of the privates. However, speaking during it is permissible.

First, (a male) must perform the Practice of the Prophet of *idṭibāʿ*. *Idṭibāʿ* is to pass the cloak under the right arm so that both corners of the robe are over the left shoulder.⁵³⁹ Then, one places the House to the left and performs the circumambulations, beginning with the Black Stone so that between one and the House there is not less than three steps distance lest the foot step on the foundation⁵⁴⁰ which is the boundary of the House. When commencing the circumambulation, one says: "*O God, (I do this) with belief in Thee and in affirmation of Thy Book, in faithfulness to Thy covenant, and in obedience to the practice of Thy Prophet Muhammad on whom be the blessings and peace of God.*"

⁵³⁷ "the House" (*khānah*): that is, the Ka'bah (*Ka'bah*), the House of God (*bayt Allāh*). In Persian, it is customarily referred to as *khānah-yi khudā*.

⁵³⁸ "the Circumambulation": *tawāf*.

⁵³⁹ This is to leave the pilgrim's right arm bare and free for pointing, etc., much in the manner of the ancient Roman toga. This practice applies only to males.

⁵⁴⁰ "foundation" (*shādarwān*): The Ka'bah is built upon a foundation which is thicker than the walls of the Ka'bah itself. It projects out about a foot beyond the outer edge of the wall and is about 10 inches high.

Upon reaching the Door of the House,⁵⁴¹ one says: "*O God, this house is Thy sacred House, and this sacred precinct is Thy sacred precinct; this security is Thy security and this is the station of one who seeks refuge with Thee from the Fire.*"

Upon reaching the Iraqi Corner,⁵⁴² one says: "*O God, I seek refuge with Thee from ascribing partnership, doubt, infidelity, hypocrisy, dissension, bad traits of character, and bad appearance in my family, property, and children.*"

When opposite the Rainspout,⁵⁴³ one says: "*O God, give me shelter under Thy Throne on the day there will be no shade except the shade of Thy Throne. O God, give me to drink from the cup of Muhammad, upon whom be peace, the drink, after the drinking of which, one will never be thirsty.*"

Upon reaching the Syrian Corner,⁵⁴⁴ one says: "*O God, make this an accepted Pilgrimage and a praiseworthy Running. (Make my) sins forgiven, and (my) trade not unprofitable, O Mighty One! O Forgiver! My Lord, forgive me and have mercy, and pass over what Thou knowest (of my mistakes), for Thou art Almighty and Most Generous.*"

Upon reaching the Yemenite Corner,⁵⁴⁵ one says: "*O God, I seek refuge with Thee from unbelief, poverty, the torment of the grave, and the turmoil of life and death. And I seek refuge with Thee from disgrace in this world and the next.*"

Between this corner and the Black Stone,⁵⁴⁶ one says: "*O God, our Lord, bestow upon us goodness in this world and in the next and preserve us with Thy mercy from the torment of the Fire and the torment of the grave.*"

One performs this seven times, and each time one utters these supplications. Each circumambulation is called a "lap."⁵⁴⁷ For three laps, one must hurry quickly and energetically. If it is crowded near the House, then it should be done at a distance so that one may proceed rapidly. In the last four laps, one walks slowly. One kisses the Black Stone each time and gestures to the Yemenite Corner. If one is not able to do this because of the crowd, then one gestures. When the seven laps have been completed, one stands between the door of the House and the Stone and places the abdomen, chest, and the right side of the face on the wall of the House with both hands below one's head placed on the wall

⁵⁴¹ The Door is in the eastern wall, about 7 feet above the ground.

⁵⁴² The Iraqi corner is the northern corner.

⁵⁴³ The rainspout (*nāwdān*) which carries rain water off the roof. It is near the top of the northwestern wall.

⁵⁴⁴ The Syrian Corner is the western corner.

⁵⁴⁵ The Yemenite Corner is the southern corner.

⁵⁴⁶ The Black Stone is set in the eastern corner.

⁵⁴⁷ "lap": Ar. *shawṭ*.

or strike the curtains of the Ka'bah. This place is called the *Multazim*.⁵⁴⁸ Supplications made here are answered. One says: "*O God, O Lord of the Ancient House! Emancipate my neck from the fire and protect me from all evil! Make me content with what Thou givest me as sustenance and bless me in what Thou givest me.*"

Then, one utters blessings (upon the Prophet) and the "Seeking Forgiveness," and pours out whatever is in one's heart.

Then, one stands back and performs two bows of formal prayer; they are called "the Two Bows of the Circumambulation." In the first bow, one should recite the Praise and the Disbelievers⁵⁴⁹ and in the second, the Praise and the Unity.⁵⁵⁰ One should supplicate God after the formal prayer. Until one has completed the seven laps, (the rite of) one circumambulation is not completed. One performs a two-bow prayer after every seven laps. Then, one moves close to the Black Stone and kisses it and finishes (the circumambulation). Then, one turns to perform the Running.

THE MANNER OF PERFORMING THE RUNNING

One must exit (the Grand Mosque) by the Safa Gate.⁵⁵¹ One mounts the few steps to the top of Safa (Hill) so that one sees the Ka'bah. Facing the Ka'bah, one says: "*There is no god but God; He is One and has no partners. His is the sovereignty and His is the praise. He gives life and causes death. He is Ever-living and does not die. In His Hand is all goodness and He is All-Powerful over everything. There is no god but God; He is One. He has kept His promise and helped His servant. He fortified His army and vanquished the Confederates alone. There is no god but God! (We are) faithful to Him in our religion, even if the unbelievers loathe (us).*"

One supplicates God and makes whatever request one wishes. Then, one descends and begins the Running⁵⁵² to (the hill of) Marwah. At the beginning, one proceeds slowly, saying: "*My Lord, forgive me and have mercy and pass over what Thou knowest (of my mistakes), for Thou art Almighty and Most Generous. O God! Our Lord, give us goodness in this world and the next and protect us from the torment of the fire.*"

⁵⁴⁸ *Multazim*: engaged, committed, under obligation, etc. (Wehr); taking as a duty upon one's self, convinced, etc. (Steingass).

⁵⁴⁹ Quran, chapters 1 and 109.

⁵⁵⁰ Quran, chapters 1 and 112.

⁵⁵¹ The expansions of the precincts of the Great Mosque of Makkah in the 20th CE century have altered the geography considerably. The hillocks of Safa and Marwah are now covered and incorporated into the Grand Mosque itself. The Safa Gate was originally in the southeastern wall of the precinct and one went outside of the mosque in the open air.

⁵⁵² "Running, the" Ar. *sa'ī*.

Thus, one goes slowly (at a normal walking pace) until one reaches the green column that is in the corner of the mosque. Before (reaching) it, at a distance of six yards, one starts to run until one reaches the other two green columns. Then one goes on slowly until reaching Marwah. When one returns to Safa, this constitutes two laps. One does this seven times, each one in this manner.

When one has finished this, the Circumambulation of Entry and the Running have been performed. This is a Practice of the Prophet in the Pilgrimage. However, the circumambulation that is obligatory is performed after the Standing.

It is the Practice of the Prophet to be in a state of purity during the Running, and it is obligatory in the Circumambulation. This is enough for the Running. It is not a necessary condition after the Standing, but (a running) must follow a circumambulation, even if that circumambulation is a Practice of the Prophet (rather than an obligatory one).

THE MANNER OF THE STANDING AT 'ARAFAH

Know that if the caravan arrives at 'Arafat on the Day of 'Arafah they must perform the Circumambulation of Entry. If they arrive before (the Day of) 'Arafah, they (first) perform the Circumambulation of Entry and leave Makkah on the Day of Preparation.⁵⁵³ That night, they remain at Mina and the next day go to 'Arafah. The time of the Standing begins on the afternoon on the Day of 'Arafah until the dawn of the Day of the Festival appears. If they arrived after dawn, the Pilgrimage is nullified. On the Day of 'Arafah, they perform the greater ablution and perform the noon and afternoon obligatory formal prayers⁵⁵⁴ together so that they may occupy (themselves) in making supplications.

They do not fast on this day so that they may gain strength to extend their supplications, for the inner mystery of the Greater Pilgrimage is the congregating of dear souls and the aspirations at this noble moment. The most meritorious remembrance at this time is the phrase *There is no god but God*. In short, one must be occupied from noon to dusk with supplication, weeping, seeking forgiveness, making sincere repentance, and begging pardon for the past.

There are many supplications for this time, the citing of which would be lengthy. We have cited them in *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*. One may learn them from there, or one may recite any supplication one knows at this time, for all supplications are effective during this auspicious time. If one cannot recite them from memory, one

⁵⁵³ The Day of Preparation (*tarwiyah*): the 8th of Dhul-Hijjah.

⁵⁵⁴ That is, they are performed at the same time, one immediately after the other.

should read them, or say "Amin" continuously while one has someone else recite them.

One must leave the boundaries of 'Arafat before the sun sets.

THE MANNER OF THE REST OF THE ACTS OF THE PILGRIMAGE

Then, one leaves 'Arafat and goes to Muzdalifah and performs the greater ablution, for Muzdalifah has a sacred precinct.⁵⁵⁵ The evening prayer is delayed and performed (in conjunction) with the night prayer with one Call to Prayer and two Calls to Assemble.⁵⁵⁶ If one can, one should remain awake all of this night at Muzdalifah, for it is a noble and valuable night. Standing at night there is one of the acts of worship. Whoever does not establish himself there must sacrifice a sheep.

From this place, one picks up seventy stones to throw in Mina, for many such stones may be found here. During the second half of the night, one sets out from Mina and performs the early dawn obligatory prayer. When one reaches the end of Muzdalifah, the place called the Sacred Monument,⁵⁵⁷ one sits and supplicates until the breaking of the dawn. After this one reaches a place called the valley of Muḥassir. One should drive one's animals faster here. If one is on foot, one should increase one's pace until one has crossed its breadth, as this was the Practice of the Prophet.

Then, on the morning of the Festival, one should utter the Magnification and the Compliance⁵⁵⁸ from time to time, until one reaches the height where are what are called the *Jamarāt*.⁵⁵⁹ Passing this place, one reaches an elevation to the right of the road which, when one faces the direction of prayer—it is called the Jamarat-al 'Aqabah—until the sun is a spear's length high. Then, one throws seven stones at this Jamarah. It is preferred to be facing the direction of prayer (when throwing them). Here, the (slogan) is changed from the Compliance to the Magnification.

⁵⁵⁵ The sacred precinct at Muzdalifah is the Hill of Quzah.

⁵⁵⁶ That is, one call to assemble for each obligatory prayer, but the evening prayer is performed immediately after the sunset prayer.

⁵⁵⁷ "the Sacred Monument" (*Mash'ar al-Ḥarām*): This place is mentioned in the Quran (Q. 2:198) in a passage about the Pilgrimage. As the Ghazzali's text indicates, it is located in Muzdalifah.

⁵⁵⁸ "the Compliance" (*talbiyah*): That is the uttering of: "I am at Thy service. O God!, I am at Thy service! Thou hast no partner, I am at Thy service. All praise, blessings, and sovereignty are Thine. Thou hast no partner."

⁵⁵⁹ "the Jamarāt" (sing. *Jamarah*): the three pillars of stone at Mina commemorating, according to tradition, the three places Satan manifested himself in the shape of a venerable old man to Adam, Abraham, and Ishmael. The pillars are called "the high" (*al-ʿulā*), "the middle" (*al-wustā*) and "the last" (*al-ʿaqabah*). The stones collected at Muzdalifah are cast at these pillars as a symbolic repudiation of Satan.

With every stone one throws, one says: "*O God, in affirmation of Thy Book and in obedience to the practice of Thy Prophet Muhammad.*" After finishing this, one refrains from crying the Compliance or the Magnification—except after performing the necessary acts of obligatory formal prayer in which the Magnification is pronounced—until morning of the last of the days of *tashrīq* dawns,⁵⁶⁰ which is the fourth day of the Festival of the Sacrifice. Then, one returns to one's camp and makes supplications. Then, one offers the sacrifice, if one wishes to do so, observing the rules of the sacrifice, and shaves one's hair. After one has cast the stones and shaved this day, one achieves a remittance⁵⁶¹ and all of the restrictions of the Consecration are lifted save those of sexual intercourse and hunting.

Then, one goes to Makkah and performs the Circumambulation of the Corner. When half of the night of the Festival has passed, the time for this circumambulation begins. However, it is preferred that it be done on the day of the Festival. The end of the time (for this circumambulation) is not fixed; on the contrary, if one delays, it is not invalid, but the other remittances are not obtained and sexual intercourse remains unlawful.

After one performs this circumambulation—in the form we have described with respect the Circumambulation of Entrance—the Greater Pilgrimage is complete. Sexual intercourse and hunting become lawful.⁵⁶² If one has not done so, one performs the Running of the Corner after this circumambulation. After the casting stones, cutting the hair, and the Circumambulation have been performed, the Greater Pilgrimage is complete and one leaves the state of Consecration.

As for the casting of stones during the days of *tashrīq* and the stopping at Mina, they occur after leaving the consecrated state. When one has finished the Circumambulation and the Running, one comes to Mina on the day of the Festival and spends the night there, for this station is obligatory. The next day, one performs the greater ablution, after the noon hour, for the casting of the stones. One throws seven stones at the first Jamarah⁵⁶³ which is nearest 'Arafat. Then one stands facing the direction of prayer and supplicates (God), in the amount of the Chapter of the Cow,⁵⁶⁴ and then, one throws seven stones at the middle Jamarah and supplicates God. Then one throws seven stones at the last

⁵⁶⁰ "*tashrīq*": literally, "*drying flesh in the sun.*" A name given to the three days after the sacrifice at Makkah during the Greater Pilgrimage, either because the flesh of the sacrificial victim is then dried, or because the animals are not sacrificed until sunrise.

⁵⁶¹ See Note 529. The shaving of the hair applies, of course, to males only.

⁵⁶² This is the second remittance referred to in the previous paragraph.

⁵⁶³ "the first *jamarah*": that is, the "high *jamarah*" referred to in Note 559.

⁵⁶⁴ The Chapter of the Cow (*Sūrat al-Baqarah*): the second and longest chapter of the Quran. One offers supplications for a period as long as it would take to recite this chapter.

Jamarah and stays the night at Mina. On the third day of the Festival, one casts twenty-one stones in the same manner at the Jamarāt. If one wishes to content oneself with this, one proceeds to Makkah. If one stays until the sun sets, staying the night also becomes necessary. On the next day one must also throw twenty-one stones.

THE MANNER OF THE LESSER PILGRIMAGE

If one wishes to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage, one performs the greater ablution and puts on the garb of Consecration, as in the Greater Pilgrimage, and leaves Makkah for one of the rendezvous points for pilgrims.⁵⁶⁵ They are Ja'ranah, Tan'im, and Hudaybiyah. One declares the intention to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage and says: "*I am at Thy service for the Lesser Pilgrimage.*" One goes to the Mosque of 'Ayishah (R) and performs two bows of formal prayer, then one returns to Makkah, repeating the Compliance while on the way. Upon entering the (Sacred) Mosque, one stops uttering the Compliance and performs the Circumambulation and the Running, as we have described for the Greater Pilgrimage. Then one cuts one's hair in the Lesser Pilgrimage and with this, it is completed.

One can do this during the entire year. Anyone who is there should perform the Lesser Pilgrimage (frequently). If he is not able to do that, he should perform the Circumambulation (frequently). If he is not able to do that, he must contemplate the House (frequently). Upon entering the House,⁵⁶⁶ he should perform a prayer between its two pillars. He should enter barefoot, respectfully and with veneration. One should drink as much of the water of Zamzam⁵⁶⁷ as possible, so that the stomach is full: it is the cure for whatever thou intendest. One says: "*O God, make it a remedy for all sickness; bestow upon us sincerity, certainty, and dispensation in this world and the next with Thy mercy, O Most Merciful and Most Compassionate!*"

THE FAREWELL CIRCUMAMBULATION

When one intends to leave, first one packs up one's things and the last thing of all that one does is to bid farewell. This is done in the form of a circumambulation. In this circumambulation, there is not the throwing the robe over the left shoulder or any hurrying. One performs a

⁵⁶⁵ "rendezvous points for pilgrims" or "Stations": *miqāt*.

⁵⁶⁶ That is, upon going inside the Ka'bah itself.

⁵⁶⁷ Zamzam: the name of the well close by the Ka'bah. In Islamic tradition, it is the spring from which Hagar and Ishmael drank when thirsting after their expulsion from the household of Abraham.

two-bow prayer and goes to the *Multazim*.⁵⁶⁸ There one offers supplications and departs, in such a manner⁵⁶⁹ so that one is continually looking at the House, moving away until one passes out of the (Sacred) Mosque.

THE VISIT TO MADINAH

Then, one leaves for the visit of Madinah, about which the Messenger (S) said; "For whoever visits me after my death it is the same as though I were alive." And he said: "Whoever goes to Madinah without any motive other than a visit, a right is confirmed (for him) with God Most High to make me his intercessor."

After entering the Madinah road, one should utter many blessings for the Prophet. When one sees the walls of Madinah, one should say: "*O God, this is the Sacred Precinct of Thy Prophet, upon whom be the blessings and peace of God. Make him for me a protection from the fire and a security from the torment and a bad accounting.*"

One should perform the greater ablution first, and then enter Madinah. One should use a good scent and wear clean, white clothing. After entering, one should be humble and reverent, saying: "*My Lord, cause me to enter the entrance of truth and cause me to come out the exit of truth and from near Thyself make for me a defending power.*"

Then, one enters the Mosque (of the Prophet) and performs a two-bow prayer before the pulpit, so that the column of the pulpit is in line with the right shoulder, for this was the place of the Messenger (S). Then, one begins the visit and turns to the wall of the shrine with the back towards the direction of prayer. Placing one's hands on the wall and kissing it are not Practices of the Prophet: rather, standing respectfully at a distance is closer (to that practice). Then, one says: "*Peace be upon thee, O Messenger of God; peace be upon thee, O Prophet of God; peace be upon thee, O Beloved of God; peace be upon thee, O Choicest of God; peace be upon thee, O Most Noble of the sons of Adam; peace be upon thee, O Master of the Sent Ones; peace be upon thee, O Seal of the prophets and Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds. Peace be upon thee and upon thy pure companions and thy pure wives, the mothers of the believers. May God reward thee from us the best of what He rewards a prophet from among His people. May God bless thee whenever the rememberers remember thee and the neglecters neglect thee.*"

If someone has charged the visitor to greet (the Prophet), one says: "*Peace be upon thee from so-and-so, peace be upon thee from so-and so.*" Then, one moves two yards down and greets Abu Bakr and

⁵⁶⁸ See Note 548 above.

⁵⁶⁹ That is, by backing out.

'Umar (R) saying: *"Peace be upon both of you, O ministers of the Messenger of God and his helpers in the establishment of the religion while he was alive and his representatives after him in religious affairs, the followers in his footsteps, and the practitioners of his practice. May (God) reward you both with that which is better than He rewarded the ministers of the prophets of His religion."*

Then, one stands there and supplicates God as much as one can. Then, one goes out (of the Mosque) and goes to the graveyard and visits the graves of the Companions and the great. When one is about to leave, one visits (the tomb of) the Prophet again and says farewell.

THE INNER SECRETS AND FINER POINTS OF THE GREATER PILGRIMAGE

Know that that which we have described is the form of the actions. In each one of these actions, there is an inner secret, the purpose of which is a lesson and a reminder by teaching one of the affairs of the Hereafter.

Its real true nature is that man has been created so that he may not achieve the perfection of (spiritual) happiness so long as he does not abandon his personal free will, as we have discussed in the Prolegomena. Pursuing one's caprices is the cause of destruction. So long as he is subservient to his free will and that which it does is not in accordance to the rule of the Religious Law, he is following his lusts. His behavior is not that of a servant of God. His (spiritual) happiness lies in his servitude.

It was for this reason that monasticism and travel for peoples were commanded in other religions, so that their worshippers would go from amongst the people or to the top of a mountain and spend their entire lives in asceticism and religious striving. So the Messenger (S) was asked: "Is there no traveling about and monasticism in this religion?" He answered: "For me earnest striving and the Greater Pilgrimage are in their stead."

So God, may He be honored and glorified, has commanded the Greater Pilgrimage for our people in place of monasticism, for in it not only the purpose of striving is found but also other lessons are made manifest. God Most High has sanctified the Ka'bah and related it to Himself. He has made it like the presence of kings and has made its environs His Sacred Precinct. He has forbidden hunting (in it) and made its trees inviolable, out of veneration and respect for Him. 'Arafat is like the courtyard in the courts of kings, placed in front of the Sacred Precinct so that (people) will head for the House from all directions of the world, although they know He is above alighting in a house or in a place. However, since the yearning (of the Pilgrims) is great, whatever is related to the Friend is beloved and desirable.

Therefore, the people of Islam put aside family, property, and offspring and endured the dangers of the desert in this yearning. Like servants, they made for the Presence. In these acts of worship, there are for them things that no one could imagine, such as the casting of stones and the Running between Marwah and Safa. Since everything that is imaginable for one also becomes familiar because one knows what one is doing and why one is doing it; as one knows that in the poor rate, there is kindness for the poor, and in formal prayer the humbling of one self before the God of the universe, and in fasting, there is abasement and the defeat of the armies of Satan, it may be that one's nature will be moved in agreement. The perfection of service (to God) is that one obeys an order immediately, so that no internal importuning may appear. The Casting of Stones and the Running are among those things which cannot be done except in absolute obedience. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "In the Pilgrimage, alone, (one says) *"I am at Thy service in my Pilgrimage, my worship and my servitude."* He called this worship and servitude.

That there are some who are perplexed about the point and object of these acts is from their neglect of their true nature. Their point is their the lack of a point; their purpose is their lack of purpose, so that utter obedience be made manifest and one's view be upon nothing other than command itself. There is no room for any other benefit for the intellect and the temperament until one abandons that which belongs to the self and throws it away; for one's happiness is in its non-existence, so that nothing remains of one except God and His commands.

AS FOR THE LESSONS OF THE PILGRIMAGE, they are that this journey has been made like a model for the journey of the Hereafter. In *this* journey, the destination is the House, while in *that* journey the destination is the Lord of the House. Consequently, one must learn from the preliminaries and conditions of this journey the conditions of that journey. When bidding farewell to family and friends, one should understand that this resembles what that farewell will be during the agonies of death. One must be thus: first, one empties the soul of all ties. Then, one departs (on the journey to Makkah). As at the end of life, the soul is emptied of all things of the world; if not, the journey will be troubled.

As the provisions for the road are made up of all kinds of things and all precautions are taken to prevent being destitute in the desert, so one must know that the desert of the Resurrection is longer and more fearsome. More provisions will be needed for that place. And as one does not take anything with one which spoils quickly—for one knows that it will not last and is not suitable for the desert—in the same any, provisions which are mixed with hypocrisy and stinting will not be suitable for the Hereafter.

When one sits on one's dromedary, one should remember the funeral bier and know with certainty that one's mount on that journey will be (the bier). It may be that before one descends from the camel, it will be the time for one's funeral. This journey must be for one as though it were the provision for that journey.

When one prepares the clothing of the Consecration as one nears that place where one will take off one's ordinary clothing and don the other—and these are (for the male) two pieces of white cloth like a waist-wrapper—one must think of one's shroud, for one's clothing on that journey, too, will be different from one's usual clothing in this world.

When one sees the passes and dangers of the desert, one must think of Munkar and Nakir⁵⁷⁰ and the scorpions and serpents of the grave, for there is a vast desert between the grave and the Gathering, filled with many difficulties. Just as one will not find safety from the calamities of the desert without an escort, so one will not escape the terrors of the grave without the escort of obedience. And, as in the desert, one remains alone away family and children, so it will be in the grave.

When one begins to cry the Compliance, one know that this is the answer to the Cry of God, and the same kind of Cry will reach one on the Day of Resurrection. One thinks again of that awesomeness and one must be drowned in the momentousness of that cry. 'Ali bin al-Husayn⁵⁷¹ (R) turned pale at the time of the Consecration and began to tremble. He was not able to pronounce the Compliance. He was asked: "Why dost thou not say '*I am here at Thy service*'?" He replied: "I am afraid that if I say it, He will say: '*Not at My service and not by Thy two auspicious planets*.'"⁵⁷² When he said that, he fell from his camel and became unconscious.

Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari⁵⁷³ was the disciple of Abu Sulayman Darani.⁵⁷⁴ He related: "I was in the service of Abu Sulayman Darani. He did not utter the Compliance until he had gone a mile and fell unconscious. When he revived, he said: 'O Ahmad, God Most High revealed to Moses (A): Say to the oppressors of thy people that they should not use My name and not remember Me, for whoever remembers Me, I remember him. If they are oppressors, I remember them with

⁵⁷⁰ The angels who interrogate the deceased in his grave.

⁵⁷¹ 'Ali bin al-Husayn: The fourth Imam of the Shīahs and sumamed Zayn al-^cĀbidīn. He was noted for his piety and the poet Farazdaq wrote a celebrated ode about him. He died about AH94/712CE.

⁵⁷² The auspicious planets (nominative: *sa^cdān*; oblique: *sa^cdayn*): Venus and Jupiter.

⁵⁷³ Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawārī: A disciple of Abu Sulayman Darani (see following Note). This would place him in the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century.

⁵⁷⁴ Abu Sulayman Darani: Abū Sulaymān 'Abd al-Rahmān bin Ahmad al-Dārānī. A native of Damascus, he was one of the earliest mystics and was influential in the formation of mystical doctrine. He died shortly after AH205/820CE.

curses.” And (Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari) said: “I heard that it is said to whoever pays for his Pilgrimage using funds from doubtful sources and then says: *‘I am at Thy service,’* *‘(There is) no at Thy service and no by Thy two auspicious planets until thou dost return what is in thy two hands.’*”

As for the Circumambulation and the Running, they resemble the going of the wretched to the courts of kings. They circle around the pavilion of the king until they find an opportunity to present their own request. They come and go inside the palace looking for some one to intercede for them. They hope that the eye of the king may suddenly fall upon them and see them. The space between Safa and Marwah is the likeness of that open space.

As for the Standing at ‘Arafah and the congress of different kinds of people from all quarters of the world with their supplications in many languages, it resembles the fields of the Resurrection upon which all peoples will have been assembled, each person pre-occupied with himself and dumbfounded between rejection and acceptance (by God).

As for casting the stones, the purpose is the demonstration of servitude in the manner of pure worship. It also has a resemblance to (an act of) Abraham, the Friend (of God) (A) at that place where the devil came before him in order to cast him into doubt. (Abraham) cast stones at him. So, if thou thinkest: “Satan came to find him, but has not come to me; why should I throw stones for nothing?” know that this idea of thine has itself come from Satan! Throw the stones in order to break his back, for it will be broken by thine obedience (to God) and do everything thou art told to do! Abandon thine own control of self. Know truly that by this casting of stones thou art overcoming Satan.

This amount has been pointed out of the lessons of the Pilgrimage so that when a person comes to learn the way according to his purity of understanding, the strength of enthusiasm, and total effort in the affair, the like of these inner meanings may begin to appear to him and he may take a portion from each one. For, the life of his worship is with that and beyond the boundary of the outward appearance of things.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCERNING THE RECITATION OF THE QURAN

Know that the reading and recitation⁵⁷⁵ of the Quran is the most meritorious of the acts of worship, especially when standing during formal prayer. The Messenger (S) said: "In my opinion the most meritorious of the acts of devotion is the recitation of the Quran." And he said: "Whoever has been given the blessing of the reading the Quran and thinks that some one has been given a thing which is greater than that which has been given him diminishes that which God Most High holds dear." And he said: "For instance, if the Quran is put in a skin and thrown into the fire, the fire does not approach it." And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection, there will be no intercessor with God Most High greater than the Quran; neither a prophet, nor an angel, nor any other." And he said: "God Most High says: 'I bestow the most meritorious of the rewards of the grateful to whoever reads the Quran after offering supplications.'"

And said the Messenger (S): "These souls become rusty, just as iron (does)!" They asked: "O Messenger of God, with what to do they become cleansed?" He answered: "With the recitation of the Quran and the remembrance of death." And he said: "When I have gone, I shall leave two preachers for you to give you wisdom: one speaks and the other is silent. The one which speaks is the Quran and the one which is silent is death."

Ibn Mas'ud says: "Read the Quran, for the reward from each of its letters⁵⁷⁶ is that of ten good deeds. I do not say that *a-lam*⁵⁷⁷ is one; *a* is one, *l* is one, and *m* is one."⁵⁷⁸

Ahmad Hanbal⁵⁷⁹ (R) says: "I saw God Most High in a dream. I said: 'O Lord! What is the best way to approach Thee?' He answered:

⁵⁷⁵ "Reading and recitation": The Persian word here, *khwāndan*, has the basic meaning of "reading," but is also used to mean recitation, chanting, singing, etc.

⁵⁷⁶ The word for "letter" (*harf*) can also mean "word." Depending upon system of counting, there are between 6,204 and 6,239 words in the Quran. (Hughes) The number of letters would probably approach 40,000.

⁵⁷⁷ *a-lam*: The first *a* is the interrogative particle and *lam* is the negative past particle. *A-lam* is frequently used in classical Arabic to start a negative question, as in Q. 105:1, about the past: "Did (I, you, he, we, etc.) not...?" Only consonants are counted as letters. *A-lam* contains three letters: *ʿ-l-m*.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibn Mas'ud is emphasizing that he is not talking about *harf* as a word, but rather as a letter, thus vastly multiplying the merit of reading the Quran.

⁵⁷⁹ Ahmad (bin) Hanbal: the founder of the Hanbali school of Islamic jurisprudence (born: AH164/780CE, died: AH241/855CE), one of the four great Sunni schools. He was persecuted by the Abbasid caliphs Ma'mun and Mu'tasim in the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century. His work is the basis of law in modern Saudi Arabia.

'By My Word, the Quran.' I said: 'Even if I do not understand the meaning?' God replied: 'Even if thou dost not understand the meaning.'"

THE RECITATION OF THE NEGLIGENT

Know that the degree of whoever learns to read the Quran is great. He must observe the sanctity of the Quran and safeguard himself against improper actions. He must observe the etiquette (of handling and reading the Quran) in all of his circumstances. If not, there is a fear that the Quran may become his antagonist. The Messenger (S) said: "Most of the hypocrites of my people are readers of the Quran."

Abu Sulayman Darani said: "The punishing angels grapple with the corrupt reciters of the Quran more quickly than with idolaters." In the Torah is written that God Most High says: "O My servant, hast thou no shame that if the letter of a brother reaches thee and thou art traveling, thou must either go to one side or sit down and read it word by word and reflect upon it? This, My Book, is a letter that I have sent to thee for reflection and acting upon. And thou turnest away from it and do not act upon it. And if thou recite it, thou dost not reflect upon what it is!"

Hasan Basri, may God have mercy upon him, says: "Those who were before you considered the Quran a missive that had come to them from God Most High. They would reflect upon it by night and act upon it by day. But ye have made of it an object of research. Ye correct its letters and vowel points, but disregard its commands."

To summarize, one must know that the purpose of the Quran is not merely recitation; rather, its purpose is action. Reading is necessary for learning, and learning is necessary for obeying. The person who does not implement it but continually reads it, articulating the words correctly, is like a slave who receives a letter from his master containing some orders for him. He sits and reads the letter tunefully, uttering the correct sounds, but he does not execute a single one of its commands. He certainly becomes deserving of loathing and punishment.

THE RULES OF RECITATION: THE OUTWARD RULES

Outwardly, one must observe six rules:

THE FIRST RULE is to read respectfully. Before doing that, one should perform the purification. One should face the direction of prayer and sit humbly, as in formal prayer. 'Ali bin Abi Talib (R) says: "For every person who recites the Quran while standing in formal prayer, a hundred good deeds are recorded for each word (he utters). If he recites it while sitting in prayer, fifty are recorded; if he is in a purified state but not in prayer, twenty-five good deeds. If he is not in a state of purity, no more than ten good deeds are recorded." That which one recites at night,

especially during formal prayer, is more meritorious, for the soul is more untroubled and the merit greater.

THE SECOND RULE is that one should read slowly, meditating upon its meaning. One should not feel compelled to finish a complete reading.⁵⁸⁰ Some hurry to read the complete text every day. The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever completes a recitation of the Quran in fewer than three days does not understand the law of the Quran." Ibn 'Abbas (R) says: "If I recite *The Earthquake* and *The Calamity*⁵⁸¹ slowly and with reflection, I like this better than reading *The Cow* and *The Family of the 'Imran*⁵⁸² rapidly." 'Ayishah (R) saw someone reading the Quran rapidly. She said: "Neither is he silent, nor is he a reader of the Quran." If a person is a non-Arab who does not understand the meaning of the Quran, it is again more meritorious to read slowly in order to preserve its sanctity.

THE THIRD RULE concerns weeping. The Messenger (S) says: "Read the Quran and weep. If tears do not come, take pains to bring them." Ibn 'Abbas says: "When performing the Prostration of Glorification,⁵⁸³ do not hurry in the prostration until thou weep. If a person does not weep with his eyes, he must weep with his soul." The Messenger (S) said: "The Quran is for descending into contrition; when you read, make yourself contrite." Whoever meditates upon the Promise and the Threat⁵⁸⁴ and the commands of the Quran, and comprehends his own helplessness will perforce become contrite, if indifference has not overwhelmed him."

THE FOURTH RULE is that one give each verse its due. The Messenger (S) said that whenever he reached a verse of punishment he would seek refuge (with God); whenever he reached a verse of mercy, he would attribute inviolability to God and praise Him. At the beginning (of his reading of the Quran), he would repeat the Seeking of Refuge⁵⁸⁵ and when he left off, he would say: "*O God, have mercy upon me with the*

⁵⁸⁰ A complete reading of the text of the Holy Quran from beginning to end is called a *khatam*. The text is divided into thirty parts (*juz'* or *pārah*) to facilitate the completion of a *khatam* in thirty days, especially during the nights of Ramadan.

⁵⁸¹ *The Earthquake* and *The Calamity*: These are the 99th and 101st chapters of the Quran, among the shortest.

⁵⁸² *The Cow* and *The Family of 'Imran*: Chapters 2 and 3 of the Quran; they are the two longest.

⁵⁸³ the Prostration of Glorification (*sajdah-yi subhāna*): the prostration performed at certain fixed points in the text when reading the Quran.

⁵⁸⁴ "the Promise and the Threat" (*wa'd wa wa'id*): the Promise of paradise and the Threat of punishment.

⁵⁸⁵ "the Seeking of Refuge" (*a'ūdhu billāh*): "I seek refuge with God..."

Quran and make it a leader (imām), a light, a guidance, and a mercy. O God, cause me to remember that which I have forgotten and teach me that of which I was ignorant. Sustain me in the recitation during the times of night and day and make it a proof for me, O Lord of the worlds!"

When reaching the verses of Prostration, one must prostrate oneself. First, one pronounces the Magnification; then, one prostrates oneself. One must observe the conditions of formal prayer; that is, the covering of the genitals⁵⁸⁶ and obligatory purity. The Magnification and the Prostration is sufficient, without the Testimony and the Greeting.⁵⁸⁷

THE FIFTH RULE is that if there is something about hypocrisy in (the text), or if some other person performing formal prayer (nearby) will be disturbed, one should recite in a low voice, for it is related in the Traditions: "The superiority of private reading over reading aloud is like that of alms given in secret over those given in public." But if one is secure from these,⁵⁸⁸ it is preferred that one read in a loud voice so that another may derive a share (of the merit) by listening and so that he may also be better informed and his motivation more concentrated to increase his joy and startle him from sleep, and so that other sleepers may be roused. If all of these intentions are put together, each one receives a spiritual reward.

If one reads from the written text, it is more meritorious, because the eye also works. It has been said: "One complete reading of the Quran from the text is worth seven such recitations from memory." One of the religious scholars of Egypt went to Shafi'i and saw him prostrating himself, having laid down his copy of the Quran. (Shafi'i) said: "The study of the law has diverted thee from the Quran and I am performing the early evening prayer."⁵⁸⁹ I shall take the Book in my hand and not close it until daylight."

The Messenger (S) passed by Abu Bakr who was performing formal prayer at night and reciting the Quran softly. He asked: "Why dost thou recite softly?" (Abu Bakr) replied: "It is listening to what I am saying." (The Prophet) saw 'Umar (R) reciting (the Quran) in a loud voice. (The Prophet) asked: "Why dost thou recite in a loud voice?" He said: "I am waking up the sleeping and driving away Satan." (The Prophet) observed: "Both of you have done good." Therefore, such actions are dependent upon the intention. As the intention for both was good, both will receive a spiritual reward.

⁵⁸⁶ This dictum applies to males. For women, more of the body should be covered.

⁵⁸⁷ That is, in this prostration, it is not necessary to recite the Testimony and give the final greeting (*salām*), right and left. See Chapter Four in this Book.

⁵⁸⁸ "these": hypocrisy and annoyance.

⁵⁸⁹ That is, the early evening prayer, that which is called *'ishā'*.

THE SIXTH RULE is that one endeavor to recite in a pleasing voice, for the Messenger (S) says: "The Quran is adorned by good voices." The Messenger (S) came upon a freedman of Abu Hudhayfah⁵⁹⁰ reciting the Quran in a pleasing voice. He said: "*Praise be to God who has made such as he in my people.*" The reason for this is that however much more the voice is pleasing, the effect upon the soul is greater. The practice of the Prophet was to read it as though in a prayer niche. However, excessive melodiousness between the words and letters is the custom of the minstrels,⁵⁹¹ which is disapproved.

(THE RECITATION OF THE QURAN:) THE INWARD RULES

The inward rules of recitation are also six:

THE FIRST RULE is that one be aware of the sublimity of the words, for they are the words of God, eternal, an attribute of His, existing through His essence; but that which (the reader) utters is words. Just as it is easy to pronounce "fire" with the tongue—and everyone is capable of doing that—yet one cannot endure the fire itself; so, neither the seven heavens nor the seven climes would have the power to support the manifestation of the true nature of the meanings of these words, should they be revealed.

It was about this that God Most High said: *If We had caused this Quran to descend upon a mountain, (O Muhammad) thou wouldst have seen it falling down, splitting asunder, out of fear of God.* (Q. 59:21) For the beauty and sublimity of the Quran is veiled with the cloak⁵⁹² of words, so that tongues and souls may have the strength to bear it. It would not be possible to deliver it to a person, save in the cloak of words. This is not evidence that behind these words there is not some vast affair. As it is not possible to drive, water, and command livestock by the word of man alone, for (animals) do not have the power to understand (words), it is necessary for one to make one's voice closer to that of the animals in order to make them understand (what is wanted from them). They hear the sound and do the work, not understanding the reason for it. A cow, upon the hearing the sound directed at it, treads the earth. It does not understand the reason for doing this, the purpose of

⁵⁹⁰ In the *Revival*, the name of the freedman is given as Sālim. (HK) Abu Hudhayfah (Abu Hudhayfah in al-Mughirah), of the Makhzum clan, manumitted a slave by the name of 'Ammar bin Yasir who became his client and was mistreated by the Quraysh. Possibly, this is the freedman to whom Ghazzali is referring.

⁵⁹¹ "minstrels": *qawwālān*.

⁵⁹² Ghazzali uses the same word (*kiswat*) meaning "curtain, veil, cloak" that is used for the curtain that covers the walls of the Ka'bah.

which is to ventilate the soil and to mix water with both (the soil and air). When all three elements are collected together, it becomes possible for the earth to breathe, to feed the seeds, and to enable to them to grow.

The benefit that most people derive from the Quran is no more than the sound and the external meaning, so that some suppose that the Quran is itself those words and sounds. This is the farthest limit of weakness and simplicity. It is as though a person imagines that the reality of fire lies in the letters *f*, *i*, *r*, and *e*,⁵⁹³ and not realize that if (real) fire sees paper, it will burn it and the paper cannot survive it. However, these words are always on the paper, yet (the paper) is not affected.⁵⁹⁴ As there is a spirit (*rūh*) for every body that does not remain with it, the meaning of the words is like the spirit, while the words are like the body. The nobility of the body is due to the spirit, and the nobility of the words is due to the spirit of their meanings. The explanation of all of the truth of what this signifies is not possible in a book such as this.

THE SECOND RULE is that one bring the sublimity of God Most High into one's soul—for these are His words—before reading the Quran and understand Whose words one is reading and that one sits in a sea of peril. One is always told: *No one touches it save the purified ones.* (Q. 56:79)

As it is not proper to touch the (physical) book except with pure hands, one should realize that the one cannot appreciate the true nature of the words of God except with a soul cleansed of the filth of bad character and adorned with the radiance of reverence and respect. It was for this that 'Ikramah,⁵⁹⁵ upon opening the Book, would swoon and cry: "*It is the Word of my Lord! It is the Word of my Lord!*"

No one comprehends the sublimity of the Quran so long as he does not perceive the sublimity of God. When one makes present in one's soul the Throne, the Pedestal, the seven heavens and the seven climes and all that is between them of angels, jinn, man, beasts, insects, minerals, plants, and the categories of creation; and perceives that these are the Words of Him in Whose grasp are all of these (things)—all of which He would not shrink from destroying—and that there is no deficiency in His perfection, and that He is the Creator, Possessor, and

⁵⁹³ Of course, we use the English here. Ghazzali writes *ātish* (fire) and uses the letters *alif*, *t*, and *sh*.

⁵⁹⁴ That is, it does not burst into flame because of the written word "fire." Therefore, it is not real fire. In the same way, the reality of the Quran is not the bound copy; it is something other than that, resembling the relationship of the soul to the body.

⁵⁹⁵ 'Ikramah: Abu 'Abdullah bin 'Abdullah 'Ikramah, a slave of Berber (North African) origin who was attached to the governor of Basrah. He became an authority on the Quran and Traditions of the Prophet. He died AH107/725-6CE.

Provider of all; then it will be that a slight notion of His sublimity will enter one's soul.

THE THIRD RULE is that the soul be focused and not distracted during the reading. The chatter of the self must not bear (the soul) away to extraneous things. One must understand that whatever is read negligently is not read (at all) and must be repeated. It is as though a person goes to admire a garden and is then diverted from its beauties so that later, when he comes out, he has gained nothing (of that). This Quran is the panorama of the believers. There are marvels and lessons in it from which, if one reflects upon them, one will not turn to anything else. Therefore, if a person does not know the inner significance of the Quran, he will profit only a little from it; however, he must bring its sublimity to his soul so that he not become disquieted.

THE FOURTH RULE is that one meditate upon the meaning of each word so that one may understand it. If one does not understand it with one reading, one should read it again; if one is delighted by it, one should read it again. This is preferable to (trying to) read a lot.

Abu Dharr Ghaffari⁵⁹⁶ says: "The Messenger (S) repeated this verse a third of the night until morning: *If Thou punish them, lo! they are Thy servants; and if Thou forgive them, lo! Thou art Mighty (and) Wise.* (Q. 5:118) And he repeated *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate twenty times.*"

Sa'id bin Jubayr⁵⁹⁷ spent a night on this verse: *Be distinguished this day, O guilty ones!* (Q. 36:59) If he read one verse and thought about the meaning of another, he would not have done justice to that verse. 'Amir bin 'Abd Qays⁵⁹⁸ complained about inner distractions. They said it was the chatter of the world. He said: "If a knife is plunged into my chest, it would be less troublesome than my thinking about the chatter of the world while at prayer." But he considered the soul's being preoccupied with (thinking) "How shall I stand before God Most High at the Resurrection and how I shall return?" an inner distraction, because with every word that one recites during formal prayer, at that time one

⁵⁹⁶ Abu Dharr Ghaffari: A companion of the Prophet. 'Ali bin Abi Talib said about him that he acquired knowledge until he became disabled, a statement that caused speculation. 'Ali added: "He was a miser and avaricious: a miser in his faith and avaricious in his knowledge." A major source of Traditions, he died AH32/652CE.

⁵⁹⁷ Sa'id bin Jubayr: a great scholar of Kufah, executed by the notoriously able but harsh Umayyad governor of Iraq al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf (see Note 1161) in AH95-96/713CE.

⁵⁹⁸ 'Amir bin 'Abd Qays: (al-'Anbari). A 1st Islamic (7th CE) century Follower and an ascetic of Basrah, he despised wealth and women and was noted for his pious works. Denounced to Caliph 'Uthman—his puritanism led to suspicions of Kharijism, he was exiled to Damascus and probably died during the reign of Mu'awiyah (see Note 717). He is regarded by Sufis as one of the eight principal ascetics.

must not think of anything other than its meaning. When one is thinking of something else, even if it concerns religion, it is a distraction.

Indeed, in (reading) each verse, one must think of nothing other than its meaning, as when one reads the verses of the attributes of God Most High. One reflects about the mysteries of the attributes and the meaning of "Most Holy" (*Quddūs*), "Mighty" (*ʿAzīz*), "Compelling" (*Jabbār*), "Majestic" (*Mutakabbir*), "Wise" (*Hakīm*), and the like. When one reads a verse of deeds, such as *He created the heavens and the earth*,⁵⁹⁹ one understands the sublimity of the Creator from the marvels of creation and one recognizes the perfection of His knowledge and power, so that it happens that one sees God in whatever one looks upon, because one sees all (things as) in Him and one sees all (things as) from Him. When one reads this verse: *Surely We have created man from a drop of thickened fluid to test him*, (Q. 76:2) one ponders the wonders of the drop: How does a simple drop of liquid bring into being so many different things, such as flesh, skin, veins, bones, etc.? And how are the organs, such as hands and feet, head, eyes, tongue, etc., then created? And how do the marvels of the jewels of the understanding such as hearing, sight, life, etc., come into being?

It is difficult to explain all of the meanings of the Quran: the purpose of this is an admonition, in the manner of a meditation upon the Quran.

The meanings of the Quran will not appear to three persons: one is he who has not first read a superficial commentary and has not become acquainted with Arabic; another is the one who has become entrenched in great sins or has come to believe in heretical innovations which have darkened his soul; and the third is he who has studied theology⁶⁰⁰ and remained in its outer form but who disapproves of all that passes over his soul contradicting it. It is not possible for such a person to penetrate more deeply than that surface.

THE FIFTH RULE is that one's soul should change its qualities as the meanings of the verses change. When coming upon a verse inspiring fear, one's soul turns wholly into fright and weeping. When one reaches a verse about mercy, expansive (joy) and delight appear in one's soul. When it hears the attributes of God Most High, it becomes the model of humility and weakness. When it hears the absurdities of the unbelievers in what they say about God Most High—such as His son and partners—one lowers his voice and reads with shame, modesty, and embarrassment. In this way, for each verse, there is a meaning, and that

⁵⁹⁹ This phrase occurs in a number of verses of the Quran, for example in 5:18.

⁶⁰⁰ "theology": here Ghazzali uses the phrase *kalām-i i'tiqādī*.

meaning has a requirement. One must adopt that character in order to do justice to the verse.

THE SIXTH RULE is that one should listen to the Quran as though one were listening to God Most High and suppose that one is hearing it from Him. One of the great ones says: "I used to read the Quran, but did not receive its sweetness until I supposed that I was hearing it from the Messenger (S). I went more deeply and imagined that I was hearing it from Gabriel. I found the sweetness increased. Then I went (even) more deeply until I reached the greatest stage. Now, I read it as though I am hearing it from God Most High, without any intermediary, and I obtain a pleasure that I have never felt before."

CHAPTER NINE: CONCERNING THE REMEMBRANCE OF GOD MOST HIGH

Know that the object and core of all acts of worship are the remembrance of God Most High; that the buttress of Islam is obligatory formal prayer, the object of which is the remembrance of God Most High. As He said: *Surely (formal) prayer prevents lewdness and evil, and indeed the remembrance of God is greater (than all else).* (Q. 29:45)

Reading the Quran is the most meritorious of the acts of worship, for the reason that it is the word of God Most High. (Reading it) is remembering Him. All (things) in it—all cause a renewal of the remembrance of God, may He be praised and exalted. The object of fasting is the reduction of the carnal appetite so that the soul, liberated from the annoyance of the carnal appetites, may become purified and the abode of remembrance. For, when the soul is filled with carnal appetite, it is not possible to remember (Him); nor does (the remembrance) affect one. The object of the Greater Pilgrimage, which is a visit to the House of God, is the remembrance of the Lord of that House and the incitement of the longing for meeting Him.

Thus, the inner secret and the core of all of the acts of worship are remembrance. Indeed, the basis of Islam is the declaration: *There is no god but God.* This is the source of remembrance. All other acts of worship stress this remembrance. God's remembrance of thee is the fruit of thy remembrance of Him. What fruit could be greater than this? For this He said: *So remember Me, I shall remember you.* (Q. 2:152)

This remembrance must be continuous. If it is not continuous, it should be most of the time, for salvation is tied to it. For this, He said: *And remember God much; perhaps ye will be successful.* (Q. 62:10) He says that if ye have the hope of salvation, the key to that is much remembrance, not a little, and more frequently, not less.

And for this He said: *Those who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down...* (Q. 3:191) He praised these people because they do not neglect (remembrance) standing, sitting, lying down, or in any condition. And He said: *Remember thy Lord, (O Muhammad), within thyself humbly and with awe, in a soft voice, in the morning and in the evening, and be not of the neglectful.* (Q. 7:205) He said: "Remember Him with weeping, fear, and in concealment, morning and evening, and do not neglect (this) at any time."⁶⁰¹

The Messenger (S) was asked: "What is the best of acts?" He answered: "That thou die with thy tongue moist with the remembrance of God Most High." And he said: "Should I not inform you of the best of

⁶⁰¹ This is Ghazzali's paraphrase of the Quranic verse.

your actions—the most acceptable to the King, may He be exalted—and your highest degrees, that which is better than giving alms of silver and gold, and better than shedding your blood in battle against enemies in defense of the faith?” They asked: “What is that, O Messenger of God?” He said: “*The remembrance of God.*” The remembrance of God Most High! And, he said: “Whomever the remembrance of me engages in the worshipful supplication of God, his gift is, in my opinion, greater and better than giving (alms) to beggars.” And he said: “The rememberer of God Most High among the heedless is like a living person amongst the dead, or like a green tree amongst dead vegetation, or like the warrior for the faith who stands fighting amongst those fleeing.”

Mu'adh (bin) Jabal (R) says: “The dwellers in Paradise regret nothing save the hour when they were in the world and did not remember God Most High.”

THE TRUE NATURE OF REMEMBRANCE

Know that there are four degrees of Remembrance (of God):

THE FIRST is that it be with the tongue while the soul is inattentive. The effect of this is weak, but it is still not without some effect, for the tongue that is busy with service is better than the tongue that is busy with foolishness or left in idleness.

THE SECOND is that it be in the soul, but not established firmly and dwelling (in it). It is as though the soul must be constrained to do it, so that if there were no (conscious) effort and constraint, the soul would, from inattention and the whisperings of the self, revert to its normal nature.

THE THIRD is that in which the remembrance is resident, established, and dominant in the soul, so much so that there is no more need for importuning. This is tremendous!

THE FOURTH is that in which the Remembered—and that Is God Most High—overwhelms the soul, not the remembrance. There is a difference between him whose entire soul loves the Remembered and him who [loves]⁶⁰² the Remembrance. Rather, the perfection of that is that the remembrance and the awareness of the remembrance go from the soul, leaving the Remembered and nothing else. For, whether the remembrance be in Arabic or Persian, both of these are not devoid of the distracting whisperings of the self; on the contrary, they are the height of

⁶⁰² From the AA text.

it. The point is that the soul should be emptied of Arabic and Persian and all else and, containing nothing else, turn to Him. This is the result of the singular love, which is called "ardent love."⁶⁰³ The ardent lover engages his soul entirely with his beloved. It may happen that his soul becomes so involved with the beloved that he forgets his own name.

When one becomes immersed thus, one forgets oneself and all there is, save God Most High. One arrives at the beginning of the way of mysticism. This state is called by the Sufis "annihilation (of the self)." It is also called "non-existence (of the self)."⁶⁰⁴ All that is becomes non-existent from the remembrance of Him. (The rememberer), too, becomes non-existent, for he has forgotten himself. As there are for God Most High worlds of which we have no knowledge—nor are they our province, our existence is that of which we are aware and of which we have knowledge—when a person has forgotten these worlds which are the existence of creation, they have become his non-existence. And, when he has forgotten his own egotism, he too, has become non-existent with respect to his self. When nothing remains with him except God Most High, his existence is God and nothing else.

Just as when thou lookest at the sky and the earth and all that is in them, thou seest nothing more. Thou sayest: "The world itself is nothing more than this. This is all there is." That person (the rememberer) sees nothing save God Most High and says: "He is everything; except for Him, there is no self." At this place the separation between one and God departs and unity is achieved. This is the beginning of the world of Divine Unity and Oneness.⁶⁰⁵ That is, when the separateness departs, one is not aware of separation and distance, for a person knows separation when he knows two things: himself and God. But this person is—in this state—unaware of his self and knows nothing other than the One! How could he comprehend separation?

Upon reaching this degree, the appearance of the empyrean begins to be unveiled before him and the spirits of the angels and the prophets start to disclose themselves to him in wondrous forms. That which is reserved to the Divine Presence starts to appear to him. Tremendous events reveal themselves, which cannot be described in words.

When he comes to himself and an awareness of things appears, their effect⁶⁰⁶ stays with him. The ecstasy of that state overcomes him, the world, all that is in the world, and all that is created in it. A disquiet

⁶⁰³ "ardent love": *ʿishq*. This differs from the more general words for *love*, such as *ḥubb* and *maḥabbah*. Not found in the Quran, *ʿishq* is derived from a root with a meaning of being joined together, entwined.

⁶⁰⁴ "annihilation": *fanā* (Ar.); "non-existence": *nistī* (Per.). They are virtually synonyms.

⁶⁰⁵ "Oneness": Ar. *Waḥdānīyat*.

⁶⁰⁶ "their effect": the effect of the visions.

enters his soul. He is physically among people, but his soul is absent. He is astonished at people who are engaged in the activities of this world and he looks upon them with pity, for he knows what things they have missed and of which they have been deprived. But the people laugh at him! Why is he not engaged in the affairs of this world? They think that he may be mad or afflicted with some form of melancholia.

So, if a person does not achieve the stage of annihilation and non-existence and these states and disclosures do not appear to him—but the remembrance has overcome him—this is the *Alchemy of (Spiritual) Happiness*. For, since the remembrance (of God) has taken possession, familiarity and love have triumphed to the point that one loves God more than all the world and that which is in it. This is the foundation of (spiritual) happiness. Since his starting point and his ending point is with God, he will attain the perfection of pleasure at death. His witnessing will be in accordance with his love. For that person whose beloved is the world, his sorrow and pain at separation from it will be proportionate to his love for the world, as we have said in the Prolegomena.

Therefore, if a person remembers God much, but does not achieve these states of the Sufis, he should not become fearful, for this (spiritual) happiness is not suspended because of that. Since the soul has been adorned with the light of remembrance of God, it is prepared for perfect happiness. Everything that does not appear in this world will appear after death. One must always persevere in guarding the soul so that it confides in God and is never negligent. Continual remembrance is the key to the wonders of the Kingdom of the Divine Presence. That is the meaning of what the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever wishes to admire the gardens of Paradise, must remember God Most High much."

From what we have indicated, it is plain that the core of all acts of worship is the remembrance of God. True remembrance is that which comes at the time one enjoins the good and prohibits the evil, and remembering God when one holds back at the time of committing a sin, and at the time one implements (God's) commandments. If it happens that remembering Him is not like this, it is a sign that (the remembrance) is talking to oneself and does not have reality.

THE MERIT OF EXULTATION, GLORIFICATION, PRAISE, BLESSING, AND ASKING FORGIVENESS

*THE EXULTATION:*⁶⁰⁷ The Messenger (S) says: "Every good deed performed by a servant (of God) is placed in the scales on the Day of Resurrection, except the utterance of *There is no god but God*. If this

⁶⁰⁷ The Exultation (*tahlil*): the declaration of "There is no god but God" (*lā ilāha illāllāh*).

were to be placed in the scales, it would exceed the seven heavens and the seven climes and all that is in them." And he said: "The one who says *There is no god but God*, though he has sins in the amount of the soil of the earth, if he be sincere in it, he will be allowed to pass." And he said: "Whoever has uttered *There is no god but God* with sincerity will go to heaven." And he said: "For whoever says *There is no god but God, Alone, He is without any partner; to Him belongs the praise; He gives life and causes death; He is Omnipotent in all things* one hundred times a day, it is as though he had freed ten bondmen. One hundred good deeds are recorded for him in the register (of deeds), and one hundred bad deeds are erased. These words will be a refuge for him from Satan until the night."

In the *Sahih*,⁶⁰⁸ it is written that it will be for whoever recites these words as though he had freed forty bondmen of the descendants of Ishmael, (A).

THE GLORIFICATION⁶⁰⁹ AND THE PRAISING:⁶¹⁰ The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever says one hundred times every day *Glory be to God and in His praise*,⁶¹¹ all his sins will be forgiven, even if they are as great as the froth of the sea." And he said: "Whoever, after every formal prayer, says *Glory be to God thirty-three times, Praise be to God*⁶¹² thirty-three times, and *God is Greater*⁶¹³ thirty-three times and then finishes with a hundred-fold repetition of *There is no god but God, Alone, He is without any partner; to Him belongs the sovereignty and to Him belongs all praise; He gives life and causes death; and he is Omnipotent in all things*—he will have his sins forgiven, even if they are as great as the froth of the sea."

It is narrated that a man came to the Messenger (S) and said: "My world has collapsed. I am in difficult straits and penniless. I am destitute. What should I do?" He said: "Where art thou with respect to blessing the angels and glorifying creatures by which sustenance is obtained?" He replied: "What are they, O Messenger of God?" He said: "*Glory be to God Almighty, glory be to God with His praise, I ask forgiveness of God.*" Say this one hundred times every day after performing the early morning obligatory formal prayer, after the dawn, until the world turns toward thee, whether it wishes to or not. From each word, God Most High creates an angel who continually glorifies (Him) until the Resurrection and the spiritual reward of that is thine."

⁶⁰⁸ *Sahih*: a reference to the book of Traditions of the Prophet collected by Bukhari.

⁶⁰⁹ The Glorification (*tasbiḥ*): the declaration of 'Glory be to God (*subḥānallāh*)!'

⁶¹⁰ The Praising (*tahmid*): The declaration of 'Praise be to God (*alḥamdu lillāh*)!'

⁶¹¹ "*Glory be to God and in His praise*": Ar. *Subḥān-allāh wa bi-ḥamdihi*.

⁶¹² "*Praise be to God*": Ar. *Al-ḥamdu lillāh*.

⁶¹³ "*God is greater*": Ar. *Allāhu akbar*.

And the Messenger (S) said: "The lasting good deeds⁶¹⁴ are these words: *Glory be to God and praise be to God and there is no god but God and God is greater.*" And he said: "I prefer saying these words more than all that is under the course of the sun." And he said: "The most beloved words to God Most High are these four." And he said: "Two words are light on the tongue but heavy in the scales and beloved by the Lord of the world: *Glory be to God and with His praise and Glory be to God Almighty.*" The poor said to the Messenger (S): "The rich have carried off all the reward of the Hereafter, for whatever we do in worship, they do also, and they give alms, while we are not able to." He said: "For you, because of your poverty, every glorification, exultation, and magnification (that you utter) is alms. Every command to do good and every prevention of bad deeds are likewise (alms). If one of you puts food in the mouth of a member of his family, that is alms."

Know that the virtue of the glorifications, praisings, and exultations uttered by the poor person is greater, because the souls of the poor are not darkened by the gloom of the world and are purer. One of his words is like a seed that falls on clean earth; it is very effective and produces much fruit. Remembrance in a soul filled with the appetite for the world is like a seed that falls on saline earth; it has little effect.

THE BLESSING: One day the Messenger (S) came out appearing very happy. He said: "Gabriel (A) came and said: 'Congratulations! God Most High says: "Art thou not content with the fact that when one of thy people gives thee blessings,⁶¹⁵ I give him ten blessings, and when he greets thee with *Peace* once, I greet him ten times, and that the angels and heavenly host do the same?"'"

The Messenger (S) said: "All the angels send blessings to whoever sends blessings to me; indeed, whether it to be much or a little." He said: "The priority for me is that person who sends me many blessings." And he said: "Whoever sends a blessing to me will have ten good deeds recorded for him and ten bad deeds erased from him." And he said: "For him who sends blessings upon me when writing something, the angels ask forgiveness so that my name may be written in that book."

ASKING FORGIVENESS: Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "In the Quran, there are two verses for which, if someone who has committed a sin reads, his sin will be forgiven: *And those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember God and implore forgiveness for their sins—(who*

⁶¹⁴ "lasting good deeds" (*bāqiyāt-i ṣālihāt*): a reference to a phrase in a verse in *Sūrah al-Kahf* (The Cave): *Wealth and children are an ornament of life of the world. But the enduring good deeds are better in thy Lord's sight for reward (thawāb), and better in respect of hope.* (Q. 18:46)

⁶¹⁵ "blessings": Ar. *ṣalawāt*.

forgives sins save God?—and will not knowingly repeat what they did); (Q. 2:135)⁶¹⁶ Yet, whoso does evil or wrongs his own soul, then seeks pardon of God, will find God Forgiving, Merciful. (Q. 4:110)

God Most High says to the Messenger (S): *So glorify thy Lord with praise and ask forgiveness of Him; truly, He is Ever-returning (to mercy).* (Q. 110:3) The Messenger (S) has said much in this regard: *“Glory be to Thee, O God, and with Thy praise. O God, forgive me; truly, Thou art Ever-returning (to mercy), Merciful.”*

And the Messenger (S) said: “Whoever asks for forgiveness much will find comfort in every affliction and liberation in every stricture. His sustenance will come from a place of which he never imagined.” And he said: “I ask for forgiveness seventy times every day.” If he did this, it is clear that for other people, they must never cease doing so. And he said: “Whoever when going to sleep says three times: *“I ask forgiveness of God, than Whom there is no other God, the Living, the Eternal”* will be forgiven all of his sins, even though they are in the amount of the froth of the sea, the sands of the desert, the leaves of the trees, or the days of the world.” And he said: “No person commits a sin that will not be forgiven if he purifies himself, performs two bows of formal prayer, and asks forgiveness.”

THE RULES OF SUPPLICATION

Know that supplicating (God) with humility and weeping is one of the things that bring one near (to Him). The Messenger (S) says: “Supplication is the marrow of worship.” This is because the purpose of worship is humble veneration.⁶¹⁷ Humble veneration is in that in which one sees both the fragility of oneself and the greatness of God and knows it. Both of these appear in supplication. However more one is humble, the better it is. One must observe eight rules:

FIRST: One should strive to do it at a noble time, such as ‘Arafah, Ramadan, Friday, the pre-dawn, and during the night.

SECOND: One should observe the exalted occasions, such as—for the warriors of the faith—at the time of forming battle lines against the unbelievers, when it rains, and the time of obligatory formal prayer. For it is related in the Traditions that the gates of the heavens are thrown open at these times. The same (is true) for the time between the call to obligatory formal prayer and the call to assemble in lines, and when one

⁶¹⁶ The portion of this verse that Ghazzali has omitted, substituting an “etc.,” is given in full between the parentheses.

⁶¹⁷ Both key Arabic words in this sentence, *‘ibādat* (worship) and *‘ubūdiyyat* (humble veneration), come from the same root (‘-b-d) with the meaning of worship, serving, venerating, adoring, and also slavery and bondage.

is fasting, and when the soul is tender, for the tenderness of the soul is a sign of the opening of the Gate of Mercy.

THIRD: One should raise both hands at the conclusion (of the supplication) and pass them down the face, for in the Traditions it is related: "God Most High is too generous to allow a hand raised to Him to return empty." The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever supplicates will not be devoid of three things: either his sins will be forgiven, or some good will come to him immediately, or some good will come to him in the future."

FOURTH: One should not supplicate doubtfully; rather, the soul should be convinced that its plea will certainly be answered, for the Messenger (S) has said: "*Supplicate God when ye are certain of being answered.*"

FIFTH: One should supplicate with weeping, entreating, humility, and the presence of the soul, for it is related in the Traditions: "The supplication of the negligent soul is not heard."

SIXTH: One should be persistent in prayer and supplication, repeating them continually and determinedly. One should not say: "I have supplicated God many times, but He has not answered." God better knows the appropriate time for answering a supplication. When one receives one's answer, it is the practice of the Prophet to say: "*Praise be to God by Whose favor good works are accomplished.*" When the response is delayed, one should say: "*Praise be to God in all conditions.*"

SEVENTH: One should first glorify God and give blessings (to the Prophet). The Messenger (S) used to say before his supplications: "*Glory be to my Lord, the Exalted, the Munificent.*" And he has said: "Whoever wishes to supplicate God should first give me his blessings so that he may certainly be answered. God Most High is too generous to grant one of two supplications and refuse the other."

EIGHTH: One should repent, abandon injustice, and bring one's soul totally to God Most High; for most rejected supplications are due to the inattention of souls and the darkness of sins.

Ka'b al-Ahbar⁶¹⁸ says: "Once there was famine among the Children of Israel. Moses (A) with all his people prayed for rain three times, but without result. Revelation came upon Moses that there was a talebearer amongst his people. As long as he was among them, the supplication would not be answered. Moses said: 'Indeed, O Lord, who is that person so that I may expel him?' God replied: 'I have forbidden talebearing among you. How could I bear tales?' Moses said: 'We shall

⁶¹⁸ Ka'b al-Ahbar: originally a Jew from Southern Arabia, he converted to Islam during the reign of the second caliph, 'Umar (see Note 299). He was with 'Umar when he entered Jerusalem AH17/638CE and Ka'b pointed out the site of the Temple to 'Umar. Though suspected of Judaizing tendencies, he was regarded as a considerable authority on the stories of the prophets and tribal traditions. (EJ, etc.) He died AH32/625CE.

repent for talebearing and slander.' They all repented and rain began to fall."

Malik Dinar⁶¹⁹ says: "Once there was a famine among the Children of Israel. They came out to perform the prayer for rain many times, but (their supplications) were not accepted. Then it was revealed to their prophet: 'Tell them that they have come out and supplicated with their impure bodies and their bellies filled with that which is unlawful and their hands polluted with the blood of the innocent. With this coming out (for prayer) My anger against you was increased and ye have become more distant from Me.'"

MISCELLANEOUS SUPPLICATIONS

Know that there are many supplications handed down⁶²⁰ that were uttered by the Messenger (S). It is the Practice of the Prophet to recite these in the early morning and the evening, and after obligatory formal prayers, and at other times. We have collected many of them in *The Revival* and cited some of the better ones in the book *The Beginning of the Guidance*.⁶²¹ If anyone wishes to do so, he may learn them from those volumes, for writing them out in this book would be lengthy. Most of them are well known and everyone has learned something of them.

However, there are a few supplications which occurred in events and in acts that were performed that are of the Practice of the Prophet. These are less frequently learned. We cite them here so that they may be learned and their significance understood. Each one is recited at its proper time so that the servant may not be neglectful of God at any time and lacking in humility and supplication.

When leaving the house, one must say: "*In the name of God, my Lord, I seek refuge with Thee lest I go astray or cause (another) to go astray, or oppress (someone) or be oppressed, or do something foolish or have something foolish done to me. In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful; there is no power and no strength except in God. I entrust myself to God.*"

When entering a mosque, one should say: "*O God, bless Muhammad and the people of Muhammad and grant them salvation. O*

⁶¹⁹ Malik Dinar: Mālik bin Dīnār al-Sāmī, Abū Yaḥyā. The son of a slave, he became a disciple of Hasan al-Basri (see Note 398) and became well known for his piety and learning. He died soon after AH124/740CE, about ninety years old. *Al-Fihrist* gives his death as AH130/747-8CE, while Ibn al-'Imad gives it as AH127/744-5CE. (EI)

⁶²⁰ "handed down" (*ma'thūr*): in this case, handed down by report from the Prophet and the Companions. These are at a level lower than the Traditions which have provenances that go back directly to the Prophet and the Companions.

⁶²¹ "*The Beginning of the Guidance*" (*Bidāyat al-Hidāyah*): This is No. 35 on HK's list of the works of Ghazzali, written between *The Revival* and *The Alchemy of Happiness*.

God, forgive me my sins and open the gates of Thy mercy unto me."
Enter with the right foot first.

When seated in an assembly and the talk becomes distracted, the expiation of that is that one say: "*Glory be to Thee, O God, and in Thy praise. I testify that there is no god except Thou. I ask forgiveness from Thee and I turn to Thee in repentance. I have done evil and I have wronged my self, so forgive me my sins, truly there is no one to forgive them except Thou.*"

When entering the marketplace, one should say: "*There is no god but God, Alone; He has no partner. His is the sovereignty and His is the praise. He gives life and causes death. He is Living and does not perish. All goodness is in His hand. He is Omnipotent over everything.*"

When putting on new clothes, one should say: "*O God, Thou hast garbed me in this clothing; all praise is Thine. I ask Thee for its goodness and the goodness which is made for it. I seek refuge with Thee from its evil and the evil which is made for it.*"

When seeing (the crescent of) the new moon,⁶²² one should say: "*O God, cause it to shine upon us in security, faith, security, and Islam, my Lord and thy Lord is God.*"

When the wind rises, one should say: "*O God, truly I ask Thee for the goodness of this wind and the goodness that is within it, and the goodness that Thou hast sent with it. We seek refuge with God from its badness and the badness that is within it, and the badness that Thou hast sent with it.*"

When one hears the news of someone's death, one should say: "*Glory be to Living One Who does not die; truly we belong to God and to Him we are returning.*"

When giving alms, one should say: "*Our Lord, accept this from us. Truly Thou are the All-hearing, the All-Knowing.*"

When suffering a loss, one should say: "*It may be that Our Lord will give us better than this in its place. Lo! we beseech Our Lord!*" (Q. 68:32)

When looking at the sky, one should say: "*Our Lord! Thou didst not create this in vain. Glory be to Thee! Preserve us from the torment of the fire. (Q. 3:191) Blessed be He Who hath placed in heavens the mansions of the stars, and made in them a great lamp and a shining moon.*" (Q. 25:61)

When hearing thunder, one should say: "*Glory be to Him Whom the thunder glorifies with His praise, and (so do) the angels for awe of Him.*" (Q. 13:13) When lightning flashes, one should say: "*O God, do not kill us with Thine anger and do not destroy us with Thy punishment.*"

⁶²² While in the West the new moon occurs when it is not yet visible in the sky, in the Islamic world it is the first appearance of the crescent of the new moon.

Forgive us before that." When it rains, one should say: *"O God, make it a salubrious draught and a beneficial sprouting; make it the cause of mercy and do not make it the cause of torment."*

When angry, one should say: *"O God, forgive me my sin and make my anger pass from my heart. Give me sanctuary from Satan the accursed."*

When frightened or fearful, one should say: *"O God, truly we shall strike their breasts with Thy (help). We see refuge with Thee from their evil."*

When some part (of the body) hurts, one should place one's hand upon it and say: *"In the name of God (thrice), I seek refuge with God and His power from the evil that I find and fear;"* (seven times).

When sorrow touches one, one should say: *"There is no god but God, the High, the Wise. There is no god but God, the Great Lord of the Throne."*

When is perplexed about something, one should say: *"Truly I am Thy servant and a son of Thy servant and a son of Thy (female) servant. My forelock⁶²³ is in Thy hand; Thy decree is executed in me. I beseech Thee with every name that Thou dost call Thyself, or that Thou hast revealed in Thy Book, or hast given to one of Thy created beings, or hast reserved in Thy secret knowledge; that Thou makest the Quran the springtime of my heart, the light of my breast, the departure of my distress, and the passing of my anxiety."*

When looking in a mirror, one should say: *"Praise be to God Who has created me. How good is my creation. He has formed me; how good is my form."*

When purchasing a bondman, one should put one's hand on his forehead and say: *"O God, truly I ask Thee for goodness from him and goodness from his disposition. I seek refuge with Thee from his badness and the badness of his disposition."*

When going to sleep, one should say: *"My Lord, I have lain down in Thy name and I shall rise in Thy name. This is my soul which Thou wilt receive. Its death is Thine, as is its life. If Thou detainest it, then forgive it; if Thou sendest it back, then protect it with that which Thou dost protect Thy just servants."*

When waking, one should say: *"Praise be to God Who gives us life after our death; the Return is to Him. We and the world belong to God; greatness and sovereignty belong to God. Honor and power are God's. We have been born in the nature of Islam⁶²⁴ and the word of sincere devotion, and the religion of our Prophet Muhammad, upon*

⁶²³ "forelock": a metaphor for mastery and control.

⁶²⁴ That is, we are born in Islam, the natural religion; parents and social circumstances may lead us, as children, away from Islam.

whom be the blessings and mercy of God, and the nation of our father Abraham in true belief, who was never one of the polytheists."

CHAPTER TEN: CONCERNING THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE PERIODS OF PRIVATE WORSHIP

From what we have said in the Prolegomena, it is clear that a person is sent into this strange world, the world of water and earth, to do business; otherwise, the true nature of his soul is celestial and has come from that place and will return to it. In this business, his capital is his life span, and it is a capital that is constantly decreasing. If he does not derive benefit and profit at every breath, the capital is wasted and he will be ruined. About this, God Most High said: *By the declining day! Verily man is in loss, save those believe and do good deeds and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to patience.* (Q. 103:1-3)

His parable is the man whose capital is ice. He displays it during the summer for sale. He continually cries: "O Muslims, have pity on him whose capital is melting." In the same way, the capital of life is always melting away, for all of our life is a limited number of breaths in the knowledge of God Most High. Therefore, the persons who have perceived this fact are watchful of their breaths, for they have understood that each one is a jewel that may net them eternal happiness. They are more concerned for that than a person is for his capital of gold and silver. It was for this concern that they divided the times of the night and day by pious acts, assigned a time for everything, and established the various periods for private worship.⁶²⁵

However, the periods of private worship were instituted so that none of their time would be wasted, for they knew that that person attains the (spiritual) happiness of the Hereafter who leaves the world while the intimacy and love of God Most High dominates him. There is no intimacy without constant remembrance, nor love without spiritual knowledge, and spiritual knowledge may not be acquired save through meditation. Consequently, being assiduous in remembrance is the seed of (spiritual) happiness. One must abandon the world and abandon the carnal appetites and sinning in order to obtain the tranquillity of remembrance and thought. There are two methods of continual remembrance:

⁶²⁵ "periods of private worship" (pl. Per. *wird-hā* or Ar. *awrād*, sing. *wird*): a specified time of the day or night devoted to private worship, over and above the five obligatory formal prayers. In this context, these are set phrases used to focus the mind during meditation through repetition, somewhat akin to the rosary of the Roman Catholics. *Wird* originally meant a watering place, or the coming of the animals to a watering place. As this was usually done the same time each day, the word came to be used to private devotions and meditation, in addition to the obligatory prayers, at set times during the day and night. From this, it also came to mean the words and phrases used at such times. See *Wird* in SEI, et al.

ONE is to constantly repeat "God! God!" (*Allāh! Allāh!*), with the soul (*dil*), not with the tongue. Indeed, one should not (even) say it with the soul, for this uttering is like talking to oneself. Rather, one must be continually in a state of witnessing so as never to be inattentive. However, this is very impracticable and difficult. Not everyone has the strength for this—that one's soul have a single quality and a single state—for people become bored with doing this. For this reason, many different private devotions have been posited. Some have a fixed form, such as formal prayer, and some are oral, such as reading the Quran and the Glorification;⁶²⁶ others are with the soul,⁶²⁷ such as meditation and reflection—lest one become bored. So, at every moment, there is something different to do; in the change from one state to another, there is a rest.

THE OTHER WAY is to set aside periods during (the time) which one must spend for the necessities of the world. The reality is that if one does not use all of his time for the work of the Hereafter, one should at least use most of it so that the pan of the scale for good deeds may preponderate. If one spends one half of one's time in the world and enjoyment of lawful pleasures and one half in religious work, it may be that the other pan (for bad deeds) will become weightier, for one's natural inclination will assist in all that it deems suitable, and the effort of the soul in religious activities may be contrary to one's nature, so that sincerity in (the religious activities) becomes difficult. Without sincerity, all that is done is profitless. Many deeds are needed for one (of them) to be performed with sincerity.

Therefore, more time should be given to religious activities, with worldly affairs secondary. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said, quoting the Word of God Most High: (*Glorify Him*) *during the hours of the night and parts of the day that thou mayest be well pleased.* (Q. 20:130) And He said: *And remember the name of thy Lord morning and evening; and during part of the night prostrate (thyself) to Him and glorify Him throughout the long night.* (Q. 76:25-6) And He said: *And they used to sleep but little at night.* (Q. 51:17)

All of these references agree that one should busy oneself most of the time with God Most High. This cannot be accomplished without a division of the times of night and day. Consequently, a discussion of this is necessary and inescapable.

⁶²⁶ "Glorification" (*tasbīh*): This is a devotion usually accompanied by the telling of beads or counting on the fingers, most often performed after a formal prayer.

⁶²⁷ That is, silently.

DISCLOSING THE PERIODS OF THE DAY

Know that there are five such periods during the day:

THE FIRST PERIOD is from the pre-dawn to the rising of the sun. This is a noble time, for God Most High swears an oath by it, saying: *And the morning when it brightens*, (Q. 81:18) And He said: *Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn*. (Q. 113:1) *He is the Cleaver of the daybreak*. (Q. 6:96) All are about this: that one should guard all of his breaths at this time.

When awakening from sleep, one should say: *Praise be to God Who gives us life after our death; the Return is to Him* and the supplication that has already been given.⁶²⁸ One should put on one's clothes while engaging in remembrance and supplication. While putting on clothing, one should declare the intention of concealment of the privates, conform to the rules, and be wary of hypocrisy and frivolity. Then, one should go to the privy, placing the left foot first. After that, one should perform the lesser ablution and clean the teeth with all the remembrances and supplications we have previously described.⁶²⁹ One should perform the traditional (formal prayer) of the morning,⁶³⁰ then, repair to the mosque, for this is what the Messenger (S) used to do. After the traditional prayer one should learn and recite the supplication that Ibn 'Abbas related, as we have cited in *The Beginning of the Guidance*.

Then, one goes to the mosque slowly and enters with the right foot first; one should recite the Supplication of Entrance⁶³¹ and make for the first prayer line. If one has not already performed the voluntary prayer of the Practice of the Prophet at home, one should do so now. If one has performed it at home, one should perform the "Greeting to the Mosque" formal prayer⁶³² and then, while glorifying God and asking His forgiveness, wait for the congregational obligatory formal prayer to begin. When the obligatory formal prayer has been performed, one should sit until the sun rises, for the Messenger (S) says: "*I love sitting in the mosque until the sun rises more than freeing four slaves.*"

Until the sun rises, one should engage oneself in four kinds of remembrance: supplication, glorification, reading the Quran, and meditation.

Upon giving the final salutation (*salām*) of the obligatory formal prayer, one should begin offering supplications and say: "*O God, bless*

⁶²⁸ See end of previous chapter, Chapter Nine.

⁶²⁹ See Chapter Three of this Pillar.

⁶³⁰ This is not the obligatory pre-dawn formal prayer, but a prayer of two bows from the Practice of the Prophet (*sunnah*) before the obligatory formal prayer.

⁶³¹ "Supplication of Entrance": *Du'ā-yi Dukkūl*.

⁶³² "Greeting to the Mosque" (*taḥiyat-i Masjid*): a formal prayer of two bows.

Muhammad and the people of Muhammad. O God, Thou art Peace, and from Thee is peace, and to Thee peace shall return. Preserve us in peace. Our Lord, cause us to enter the House of Peace. May Thou be praised, O Lord of Majesty and Liberality!" Then one begins to recite the traditional supplications, which may be learned from *The Revival and Supplications*.

When one has finished the supplications, one should commence the glorifications and the exultations.⁶³³ Each one should be repeated one hundred, seventy, or ten times. When one says ten (different) remembrances, each one ten times, it makes one hundred. Fewer than this is not suitable. There are many traditions about the merit of these ten remembrances that we have not related in order not to prolong the matter:

First: *There is no God but God, Alone; He has no partner. His is the sovereignty and His is the praise. He gives life and causes death. He is Living and does not die. All goodness is in His hand. He is Omnipotent over everything.*

Second: *There is no god but God, the King, the Obvious Truth.*

Third: *Glory be to God and praise be to God. There is no god but God. God is Greater. There is no power and no strength save with God, the Most High, the Almighty.*

Fourth: *Glory be to God the Almighty and with His praise.*

Fifth: *The Most Glorious, the Most Holy, Lord of the angels and the spirit.*

Sixth: *I ask forgiveness of God, there is no God but He, the Living, the Eternal. I beseech Him to turn to me.*

Seventh: *O Living, O Eternal, I appeal to Thy mercy. Do not entrust me to myself even for a blinking of the eye. Improve my affair for me, all of it.*

Eighth: *O God, there is no hindrance to what Thou givest; there is no giver for what Thou hast prevented. Diligence does not profit the fortunate in Thee.*⁶³⁴

Ninth: *O God, bless Muhammad and the people of Muhammad.*

Tenth: *In the name of God by Whose name no harm comes to anything in the earth or in the heavens. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.*

These ten utterances should be uttered ten times, or as many as one is able; for in each one, there is a different virtue, and in each one, there is a different pleasure and affection.

After this, one should recite⁶³⁵ the Quran. If one has not memorized (all of it), one should learn and recite the Quranic portions

⁶³³ "the exultations" (*tahlil*): that is, saying "There is no god but God" (*lā ilāha illā-llāh*).

⁶³⁴ That is, all comes from God. Without His allotting something, it will not come. The effort of the diligent does not bring good fortune, the decree of God does.

about the calamities, such as the *Verse of the Throne* (Q. 2:255), *The Messenger believes...* (Q. 2:285), *God bears witness...* (Q. 3:17), *Say: O God, Owner of the kingdom* (Q. 3:25), and the first (it) *glorifies*—Surah Iron (Q. 57), and the last (it) *glorifies*—Surah Banishment (Q. 59).⁶³⁶

And if something comprehensive is wanted from the Quran and the remembrance of God, one should recite that which Khidr⁶³⁷ (R) taught Ibrahim Taymi⁶³⁸—in the revelations which came to him—for there is much excellence in them. They are called *Musabba'at 'Ashar*.⁶³⁹ They are ten things, each of which is to be repeated seven times: "The Praise," (Q. 1) the two "Seeking Refuge," (Q. 113 & 114) "Sincerity," (Q. 112) "The Unbelievers," (Q. 109) and the *Verse of the Throne*. (Q. 2:255) These six are from the Quran. The other four are remembrances:

One: *Glory be to God, praise be to God, there is no God but God. God is Greater.*

Next: *O God, bless Muhammad and the people of Muhammad.*

Next: *O God, forgive the Muslims, male and female.*

Next: *O God, forgive me and my parents and have mercy upon them both. Do with me and with them, now and in the future, in religion, the world, and the Hereafter that which befits Thee; do not do to us, O our Protector, that which befits us. Truly, Thou are Forgiving and Merciful.* Concerning the merit of this, there is a long story, which has been related in *The Revival*.

When this has been done, one should occupy oneself in meditation. There is much scope for meditation and it will be discussed at the end of this book. However, that which is important every day is that one reflect upon death, life, and the inevitability of death and say to oneself: "No more than one day remains until death." The benefit

⁶³⁵ "recite": or "read."

⁶³⁶ The Quranic chapters *Iron (al-Hadid)* (Q. 57) and *Banishment (al-Hashr)* (Q. 59). Both begin with the word *sabbaha* "(it/he/they) glorify/glorifies."

⁶³⁷ Khidr (*Khidr*): an epithet meaning "the green man." It is popularly associated with a mysterious figure whom Moses encounters on a journey and with whom he travels. The story may be found in Q. 18:60-82. This encounter has been much elaborated upon in commentaries and popular tradition. There are many similarities between Khidr and the Elijah figure of later Jewish tradition. With Jesus, Idris, and Elijah, he is (in tradition) one of the four persons who have not tasted death. It is interesting to speculate about any possible connection between Khidr and the mysterious Green Knight encountered by Sir Gawain in Arthurian legend. Khidr and the Journey of Moses are discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective*. It is also available in *Moses: An Islamic Perspective*, extracted from the former volume.

⁶³⁸ Ibrahim Taymi: Ibrahim Abu Isma' bin Yazid al-Taymi. He was a Murji'ite ascetic of Kufah who died in AH92/710-711CE. The Murji'ites (the Procrastinators) held that no judgment of a true believer who had been guilty of serious sins would be made, either in this or the next, until the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, they neither condemned nor absolved such a person.

⁶³⁹ *Musabba'at 'Ashar*: The Ten Sevens.

of this meditation is enormous, for the people have turned their faces to the world and that is from the length of aspiration. But if one knew with certainty that he would die in a month or next year, he would flee all that occupies him now! It may be that they will die in a day, yet they are busy arranging affairs for ten years in the future that will never come to pass! It is for this that God Most High said: *Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and what things God has created, and that it may be that their own term draws nigh? In what fact after this will they believe?* (Q. 7:185)

After one has cleansed one's soul and has meditated upon this, the desire to prepare the provisions for (the journey to) the Hereafter pulsates in the soul. One must reflect that, in these few days, one will be able prepare something for it and he must guard against all that is sinful. One must make amends for the offenses he has committed in the past. All of this requires preparation and thought.

So, if the way is opened for some person to peer into the kingdom of heaven and earth and to gaze upon the marvels of creation, perchance to view the majesty and beauty of the Divine Presence, this thought is superior to all acts of worship and all (other) contemplations are inferior to it. For with this, the reverence of God Most High conquers the soul. So long as this reverence does not overwhelm one, love does not prevail and the perfection of (spiritual) happiness will not be achieved. The perfection of (spiritual) happiness lies in the perfection of love, but this is not east for just any person.

Moreover, there must be an exchange for this which is that one reflect upon the blessings one has received of God Most High and upon the afflictions of the world such as sickness, poverty, and the like, among the chastisements from which one has been delivered in order to realize that one is obliged to be thankful. Thankfulness is that one implement the commandments (of God) and avoid sins. In short, one should spent some time in this meditation after the appearance of the dawn, when there is no other formal prayer except the obligatory and traditional formal prayers of dawn until the sun rises, for in place (of the formal prayer) is remembrance and thought.

THE SECOND PERIOD is from the appearance of the sun until mid-morning. If possible, one should remain in the mosque glorifying God until the sun rises to height of a spear's length above the horizon, until the time in which formal prayer is disapproved passes. Then, one should perform a formal prayer of two bows. When it is the fullness of the mid-morning, that is when one quarter of the day has elapsed, then the mid-morning formal prayer is more meritorious. One should perform four, six, or eight bows, as there are traditions about all of these

(numbers).⁶⁴⁰ When the sun is high and these bows have been performed, busy oneself with things that are connected with people, such as visiting the sick, accompanying a funeral procession, taking care of the needs of Muslims, or attending some edifying assembly.

THE THIRD PERIOD is from the mid-morning until the time of the noon prayer. This period is different for different people and is not devoid of four states:

The first state is that one is capable of studying. There is no worship superior to this. On the contrary, it is preferred that a person who is able to do so should occupy himself with study after performing the obligations of the early morning. However, one should study some field of knowledge that is beneficial for the Hereafter, a field of study that weakens the desire for the world, increases the desire for the afterlife, reveals the defects and calamities of deeds, and invites (people) to salvation. On the other hand, the study of disputation, debate, the study of tales, and admonishment (from the pulpit)—in which art and rhymed prose are mixed together—all such things increase the greed for the world and sow the seeds of envy and licentiousness in the soul. Beneficial knowledge has been collected in the volumes of *The Revival* and *The Jewels of the Quran*.⁶⁴¹ They ought to be learned before other studies.

The second state is that one does not possess the ability to do this, but can engage in remembrance and worship. This is the degree of the worshippers. It is a great degree, especially if one can occupy oneself with remembrance of God so that it dominates the soul and is its master and attendant.

The third state is that one engage in something in which there is some comfort for the people, such as serving the Sufis, religious scholars, and the poor. This is superior to the voluntary acts of the acts of worship, for it is both an act of worship and a comfort for the Muslims. It also assists them in their worship, and the blessings of their supplications have an enormous effect.

The fourth state is that one is unable to do this also, and must engage in trade for himself and his family. If he conducts (his business) honestly and people are safe from his tongue and hands, if greed for the world does not compel him to seeking excess, and if he is satisfied with what is necessary; he too is counted among the worshippers and is in the second rank of the Companions of the Right Hand, even though he may not be among the foremost or the intimates. Attending the degree of integrity is the least of the degrees.

⁶⁴⁰ These mid-morning prayers are not obligatory.

⁶⁴¹ *The Jewels of the Quran* (*Jawāhir al-Qurān*). No. 37 in HK's list of the works of Ghazzali, falling between the writing of *The Revival* and *The Alchemy of Happiness*.

However, if one does not employ oneself in any of these four states, he will be counted among the destroyed and the companions and followers of Satan.

THE FOURTH PERIOD is from the decline of the sun (from its zenith) to the time of the afternoon obligatory formal prayer. One should take a nap before (the end of) this period, for a nap is to the formal prayers of night as the pre-dawn meal is to fasting. However, if there is to be no rising for the night prayers, that napping is disapproved, for too much sleep is reprehensible. After waking (from the nap), one should purify oneself before the afternoon obligatory formal prayer. One should make the effort to hear the call to prayer in the mosque and perform the (traditional) "greeting to the mosque" formal prayer and make the replies to the phrases of the mu'adhdhin's call. One should perform four bows of formal prayer before the obligatory formal prayer, for the Messenger (S) used to prolong these four bows and say: "At this time the gates of heaven are open." It is related in the Traditions that: "Seventy thousand angels will pray with whoever performs these four bows of formal prayer and seek forgiveness for him until evening." Then one performs the obligatory formal prayer with the imam and then a two-bow prayer in accordance with the practice of the Messenger (S). Until the time of the afternoon prayer, one should not engage in anything except acquiring knowledge, helping Muslims, remembering God, reading the Quran, or lawful enterprise, according to need.

THE FIFTH PERIOD is from the time of the afternoon obligatory formal prayer until the setting of the sun. One should repair to the mosque before the afternoon prayer and perform four bows of prayer, for the Messenger (S) said: "Let God Most High have mercy on the person who performs a four-bow formal prayer before the obligatory formal afternoon prayer." When finished with that, one should occupy oneself with nothing other than that which we have said.

Then one should go to the mosque before the sunset prayer and occupy oneself in glorification and asking forgiveness, for the grace of this time is the same as that of the pre-dawn. As He said: *So glorify thy Lord with praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting.* (Q. 50:39) At this time one should recite *By the sun and its brightness...* (Q. 91), *By the night when it covers...* (Q. 92), *I seek refuge (in the Lord of Daybreak)...* (Q. 113), and *I seek refuge (in the Lord of mankind)...* (Q. 114)

When sun sets, one should ask forgiveness. In short, the daytime should be divided up and for each period one should do a different thing, as is advisable for that purpose, for the blessings of life appear from this. As for the person who has frittered away his time so as to see what will happen each moment, his life is wasted.

THE DIVISIONS OF THE NIGHT ARE THREE:

THE FIRST PERIOD is from the sunset obligatory formal prayer until the obligatory formal prayer before sleep. Staying awake during the time between these two obligatory prayers has great merit. In the Traditions, it is related that this revelation: *They forsake (their) beds, calling upon their Lord in fear and in hope*, (Q: 32:17) was about this. One must occupy oneself in formal prayer until the evening obligatory formal prayer is performed. The saints considered this superior to fasting during the day and then busying oneself with eating at this time. After completing the *witr*⁶⁴² formal prayer, one should not indulge in idle talk and play, for this is the conclusion of activity and the last of the acts (for the day) should not be other than good.

THE SECOND PERIOD is sleep. Even though sleep is not worship, still, if it is adorned with the etiquette and the Practices of the Prophet, it resembles worship. It is a Practice of the Prophet (S) to sleep facing the direction of prayer and to first sleep on the right hand, as a corpse is laid in the grave; for sleep is the brother of death and waking up is like the Resurrection. It may happen that the soul will be seized during sleep and not returned. One must be prepared for the affairs of the Hereafter. One should go to sleep in a purified state and repent and resolve that one will not sin again if one should awaken (the next morning). One should keep a written will under one's pillow. One should not put oneself in bed with undue ceremony. One should not spread soft bedclothes until sleep overcomes, for sleep wastes the life span. One should not sleep more than eight hours a day, as this is one third of the twenty-four hours. If we calculate that a life has sixty years, then twenty years will be wasted in sleep.⁶⁴³ It is not right to waste more than this.

One must place water and a toothbrush nearby with one's own hands for (use) when one rises during the night or early morning for formal prayer. One should intend to rise during the night or pre-dawn, as this intention (itself) has a reward, even if sleep wins its victory.

When placing one's side on the floor, one should say: "*My Lord, I have lain down in Thy name and shall arise in Thy name.*" One should recite the supplications we have already mentioned. One should recite the *Verse of the Throne*, (Q. 2:255) *The Messenger believes...* (Q. 2:285),⁶⁴⁴ the two chapters of *Refuge*, (Q. 113 & 114), and *Surah*

⁶⁴² *witr*: "odd-numbered," that is, a prayer with an odd number of bows. See discussion in the Prolegomena. This particular prayer, performed after the evening (*'ishā'*) prayer, traditionally consists of three bows.

⁶⁴³ Alas, Ghazzali did not live to see sixty. He died when he was in his early fifties, may God be pleased with him and have mercy upon his soul.

⁶⁴⁴ That is, the verse which begins with those words: Q. 2:285.

*Blessedness*⁶⁴⁵ (Q. 67), so that one falls asleep between remembrance and purification. The soul of anyone who does this is carried to the Throne and spiritual rewards are written for him until he awakens.

THE THIRD PERIOD is the night vigil.⁶⁴⁶ It is the night formal prayer performed after waking up during the middle of the night. Two bows of formal prayer during the second half of the night are more meritorious than a multitude of formal prayers at other times. This is because at that time, the soul is purer, there is no distraction from the world, and the gates of mercy in heaven are open wide.

There are many Traditions attesting the virtue of standing at night and we have cited them in *The Revival*. In short, one must spend the periods of the night and day, each one, in some activity and not cease (doing so). If one does this for one night and day, every day one will wish to do it again until the end of one's life. If this is difficult for someone, he should not over-extend his expectations; he should say to himself: "I shall do this today for perhaps I shall die tonight. I shall do it tonight, for perhaps I will be dead tomorrow," and so on like that every day.

If one becomes distressed by persevering in this, one should know that one is on a journey and one's homeland (to which is returning) is the abode of the Hereafter. On a journey, there is the sorrow of being of a stranger, but the consolation is that it will soon be over and one will rest in one's homeland. It is obvious just how long (this) life is in comparison with the eternal life that will be in the Hereafter. It is not a cause of wonder if someone endures a year's sorrows for the comfort of ten; why should it be strange, then, if one endures the sorrows of a hundred years for the comfort of ten thousand? Rather, for everlasting comfort?

⁶⁴⁵ "Blessedness" (*Tabāruk*): this chapter is more commonly referred to as *al-Mulk* (the Kingdom).

⁶⁴⁶ "night vigil": *tahajjud*.

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

BY IMAM GHAZZALI

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

THE SECOND PILLAR: CONCERNING MUTUAL RELATIONS

In this Pillar, there are also ten chapters:

THE FIRST CHAPTER: The Etiquette of Eating

THE SECOND CHAPTER: The Rules of Conduct in Marrying

THE THIRD CHAPTER: The Rules of Conduct for Earning
and Trade

THE FOURTH CHAPTER: Seeking the Lawful

THE FIFTH CHAPTER: The Rules of Conduct of Association
With People

THE SIXTH CHAPTER: The Rules of Conduct of
Secluding Oneself

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER: The Rules of Conduct on a Journey

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER: The Rules of Conduct of *Sama'*

THE NINTH CHAPTER: Enjoining the Good and Forbidding
the Bad

THE TENTH CHAPTER: (The Art of) Governance

CHAPTER ONE: CONCERNING THE ETIQUETTE OF EATING

Know that the way of worship consists of both the acts of worship, and the provision for the way is also part of the way. Therefore, everything that is necessary for religion is also a part of religion. Eating food is necessary for the way of religion, for the aim of all travelers is seeing God Most High and the seed of that is knowledge and action, but perseverance in study and activity is not possible without a sound body, and the soundness of the body is not possible without food and drink. Consequently, the consumption of victuals is a necessity on the way of religion; ergo, a part of it. About this God Most High said: *Eat of the good things and do good.* (Q. 23:51) He combined eating food and doing good together.

So, the consumption of victuals by whoever does so in order to have the strength for knowledge and deed and for the endurance to tread the path to the Hereafter is an act of worship. As the Messenger (S) said: "There is a reward for everything for the Muslim, even the morsel he puts in his own or the mouths of his own family." He said that because the purpose of the Muslim in all of this is (traveling) the road of the Hereafter.

The signs that eating food is a part of the way of religion are that one not eat greedily, that one eat of that which is lawful, and that one eat according to one's need, while observing the rules and etiquette of eating. Know that there are Practices of the Prophet with respect to eating: some before eating, some after (eating), and some while eating.

THE ETIQUETTE BEFORE EATING

Those which precede eating are:

FIRST: One should wash one's hands and (rinse one's) mouth. Because the eating of food is with the intention (that it be) provision for the Hereafter, it is an act of worship. (The washing) is like the lesser ablution before the call to formal prayer, and the hands and mouth also become cleaner. It is related in the Traditions that the person who washes his hands before eating "will be secure from poverty."

SECOND: The food should be placed on a dining cloth,⁶⁴⁷ not on a table.⁶⁴⁸ That is what the Messenger (S) did, because the dining cloth

⁶⁴⁷ A "dining cloth" (*sufrah*) is spread on the floor or ground and the diners sit around it partaking of the food placed upon it.

⁶⁴⁸ "table" (*khwān*): Steingass defines a *khwān* as: "a table, a covered table, and the meat upon it: a spacious tray." In a note, HK says that it is a tray—and a well-tooled tray can certainly be more ostentatious than a plain piece of cloth—but that does not entirely serve

reminds one of a journey,⁶⁴⁹ and a journey in this world reminds one of the journey in the Hereafter and it is all closer to humility. Eating from a table is lawful, as no prohibition for doing so has come down to us. However, the custom of the forefathers was to use the dining cloth, and the Messenger (S) ate from a dining cloth.

THIRD: One should sit properly, with the right knee up and sitting upon the left leg, and not leaning against anything. The Messenger (S) said: "I do not eat food leaning back against something, for I am a servant. I sit as a servant does and I eat as a servant does."

FOURTH: One should form the intention that the eating is for strength in worship, not (to satisfy) one's carnal appetite. Ibrahim Shayban⁶⁵⁰ says: "I have not eaten anything for my carnal appetite for eighty years." The sign of the correctness of this intention is that one aim to eat little, for excess in eating restrains one from worship. The Messenger (S) declares: "The few morsels that keep a person erect are sufficient." If one is not content with this, one third of the stomach is for food, one third for drink, and one third for breath.

FIFTH: One should not partake of food unless one is hungry. The best of the Practices of the Prophet that should be presented to food is hunger. Before hunger, eating is blameworthy and censurable. Whoever sits down to eat hungry and gets up still hungry will never have need of a physician.

SIXTH: One should be satisfied with what is available and not importune for tasty dishes; for the purpose of the believer is the maintenance of strength for worship, not enjoyment. It is the Practice of the Prophet to hold bread in honor, for it is the support of a person. The greatest respect for it is that one not delay in eating it. Indeed, not even while waiting for obligatory formal prayer, for when the bread is ready, one should eat it first and afterwards perform the obligatory formal prayer.

SEVENTH: One should not begin to eat until the person with whom one is to eat is present, for eating alone is not good. The more

to make the distinction because a tray may also be placed upon the ground. Ghazzali's point is about simplicity and humility, and eating on the floor—as is still the custom throughout most of the Islamic world—would appear to require the sharper contrast with eating at a table (in the Western fashion), rather than eating from a tray.

⁶⁴⁹ "dining cloth (*sufrah*)... journey (*safar*)": a play on words in Persian and Arabic. *Sufrah* (*s-f-r*) resembles *safar* (*s-f-r-h*), the difference in Perso-Arabic spelling being only the additional *h* of the feminine Arabic ending to the former.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibrahim Shayban: Probably the same as Ibrahim Shaybani mentioned in *Kashf al-Mahjub*. He was a disciple of Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad (or Ahmad) bin Isma'il al-Maghribi. The same source quotes an Ibrahim bin Shayban's opinion about annihilation (*fanā*) in a section on the followers of Abu Sa'id Kharraz.

hands on the food,⁶⁵¹ the greater the blessing. Anas⁶⁵² (R) says: "The Messenger (S) never ate alone."

THE ETIQUETTE AT THE TIME OF EATING

As for the rules of etiquette at the time of eating, they are to first say: "*In the name of God*," and to finish with: "*Praise be to God*." It is better that one say "*in the name of God*" with the first morsel, "*in the name of God the Merciful*" with the second, and "*in the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate*" with the third in an audible voice so that others may be reminded.

One should eat with the right hand, and start with salt and finish with salt: for it is related in the Traditions that by means of this (act) at the outset one may defeat greed by picking up a morsel contrary to the appetite.⁶⁵³ One should make each bite small and chew it well, and not extend one's hand for another morsel before swallowing the first.

One should not criticize any food, for the Messenger (S) never did that. If it is good, one eats it; if it is not, one may withhold his hand. One should eat from that which is in front of him, except fruit, which may be taken from all sides of the tray, as it is of various kinds. One should not eat from the middle of a bowl of bread crumbled in broth; rather one should eat from the sides. One should not eat from the middle of the bread;⁶⁵⁴ rather, one should take it from the sides, going around it. One should not cut bread with a knife; the same is true of meat.⁶⁵⁵ One should not place a bowl or something inedible on the bread. One should not wipe one's hands clean with bread. Should some morsel or food fall out from the hand, one should pick it up, clean it, and eat it, for it is related in the Traditions that if it is left (uneaten), it will have been left for Satan.

One should first lick the fingers in the mouth (after eating), then wipe them with a cloth napkin⁶⁵⁶ until the signs of the food that has been

⁶⁵¹ The Prophet and the Companions of course ate by hand, as is still common in many regions where the older traditions of Islam are maintained.

⁶⁵² Anas Malik: See Note 358.

⁶⁵³ That is, by taking a pinch of salt first instead of some food the appetite craves, one shows one's mastery of it.

⁶⁵⁴ Bread was (and still is) baked in large, relatively flat, round or oval loafs varying in thickness from an eighth of an inch to an inch or so. It is usually unleavened, or only slightly so. The edges tend to have a slight crust, while the center is somewhat softer. Ghazzali says that one should eat from the edges of the loaf and not tear out pieces from the (softer) center.

⁶⁵⁵ It should be remarked that meat is normally thoroughly cooked "well done" in Middle Eastern cooking. It is usually not served rare, or even medium. When eating by hand, it is easily bitten or pulled apart and usually does not require the use of a knife.

⁶⁵⁶ "a cloth napkin" (*izār*): a piece of cloth of the material used to make loin wrappers (also *izār*) and underclothes that is used as a napkin. It is not normally fine linen.

eaten are gone (from the fingers). It may be that the blessing of (the food) will remain.

When eating dates, apricots, or anything which can be counted, one should eat an odd number—seven, eleven, or twenty-one—so that all of its effects may be related to God Most High Who is One (an odd number) and for Whom there is no mate. Every act in which there is no remembrance of God Most High of one kind or another coupled with it is futile and wasted. Therefore, odd is better than even for the reason that it is related to Him.

One should not put date-stones and dates on the same platter, nor take them together in the hand; the same for anything which has refuse and something which is discarded. One should not drink much water while eating.

THE ETIQUETTE OF DRINKING WATER

As for the rules of etiquette for the drinking of water, they are that one hold the water jug in one's right and say: "*In the name of God.*" One should drink in one continual, thin draught. One should not drink standing, nor lying down. One should first look into the water jug (to be sure) that there is no straw or living creature inside it. If a belch comes out of the throat, one should remove one's mouth from the jug. If one wishes to take more than a single draught, one should make it three times, uttering "*In the name of God*" each time, and at the end, one should say: "*Praise be to God.*" One should watch the bottom of the jug lest water fall on some place. After one has finished drinking, one should say: "*Praise be to God Who made this sweet and pleasant and not made it saline and bitter with our sins.*"

THE ETIQUETTE AFTER EATING

As for the rules of etiquette after eating, they are that one withhold one's hand before repletion and that one clean the fingers in the mouth, then by using a napkin. One should pick up bread crumbs, for it is related in the Traditions that the livelihood of whoever does thus is broadened, his children will be healthy and without defect, and (those crumbs) will become the dower of the bright-eyed ones.⁶⁵⁷

Then one should pick the teeth. Whatever is removed from the teeth by the tongue should be swallowed; whatever is removed by means of a toothpick should be thrown away. The bowl should be cleaned with the fingers. It is related in the Traditions that the bowl says about

⁶⁵⁷ "the bright-eyed ones" (*ḥūr al-ʿayn*): See Note 224.

whoever licks⁶⁵⁸ the bowl clean: "O Lord, free him from the fire as he has freed me from the grasp of demons." If one rinses it with water, one should drink the water: it is as though one had freed a slave.

After eating, one should say: "*Praise be to God Who has fed us and given us to drink and has sufficed for us and has sheltered us; He is our Lord and our Master.*" Then, one should recite the 112th (The Unity) and the 106th (*The Quraysh*) chapters of the Quran.

If the food was lawful, one should give thanks; if there is doubt about its lawfulness, one should weep and be sorrowful. A person who eats it but does not weep is like the person who eats and laughs forgetfully. When washing the hands, one puts (dry) soda⁶⁵⁹ in the left hand and washes the fingertips of the right hand first, without (using) the soda. Then, one puts the (moistened) fingers (of the right hand) in the soda and spreads it on the lips and palate and rubs them well. Then, one washes the fingers and then, one washes the mouth.

THE ETIQUETTE WHEN EATING WITH OTHER PEOPLE

The rules that we have already mentioned should be observed whether eating alone or eating with other. However, when eating with others, there are an additional seven rules:

FIRST: One should not extend one's hand (to eat) until the person who is senior to him—in age, in knowledge, in piety, or for some other reason—extends his hand.

SECOND: One should not be silent while eating, as is the custom of the non-Arabs. Rather, one speaks of pleasant things from the stories of the saints and of wisdom. One should not utter foolishness.

THIRD: One should observe the eating of his neighbor from the same bowl and under no circumstances eat more than he. That is unlawful because the food is shared. Instead, one should be generous and place the choicest morsels before him. If the companion eats slowly, one should request him to eat with more liveliness, but one should not say "Eat up!" to him more than three times, for more than that is excessive and intemperance in importuning. One should not swear oaths, because food is more humble than that it should be the cause of swearing oaths.

FOURTH: One should not impose an obligation upon the companion by saying "Eat up!" to him, but one continues to be agreeable however he eats. One must not reduce one's usual (quantity) when eating (with others), for that is hypocrisy; but one should observe the rules of etiquette when one eats alone, just as when one can eat in the presence of others. However, if one eats less out of a desire to give more to another,

⁶⁵⁸ "licks": this probably refers to licking the fingers one uses to clean the bowl.

⁶⁵⁹ Soda (*ushnān*): The herb alkali and the ashes made from it that are used for washing clothes and the hands after eating. (Steingass)

that is good. If one eats more (than usual) to enliven the others, that too is good.

Ibn al-Mubarak⁶⁶⁰ (R) used to invite the poor to eat dates. He would say: "To whoever eats the most I shall give a *diram* for each date-stone." Then he would count the date-stones to see who had eaten the most and give (him) a *diram* for each one.

FIFTH: One should look in front of oneself and not at the food of others; nor should one stop eating before the others, as they will honor him.⁶⁶¹ If one is in the habit of eating little, at the beginning one should play with one's food and then begin to eat enthusiastically towards the end. If one cannot (do this), one should make one's excuses so that others may not be reluctant (to eat) in front of him.

SIXTH: One should not do anything with is naturally disliked or hated by others. One should not shake off (food) from one's hands into the bowl. One should not bring the mouth down to the bowl in a way that something might fall out of the mouth into it. When expelling something from the mouth, one should turn away. One should not dip an oily bit of food in vinegar. One should not return a piece of food which has been torn apart with the teeth to the bowl—for this will naturally be repugnant to all, and one should not talk about disgusting things.

SEVENTH: After washing one's hands in the basin, one should not spit into it in front of people. A person to whom one defers should be given precedence, but if he yields (this honor), one should accept it. One should pass (the basin) from the right side. Water should be handed from hand to hand for all, and not poured separately as is the custom of the non-Arabs. If the hands are washed at one time by all, the first is nearest to humility. When spitting out water from the mouth, one should do so gently so as not to splash it on anyone and spatter the carpet. It is preferred that the person pouring the water on the hands be standing rather than sitting.

All of these rules of etiquette have been reported in the Traditions and the non-Prophetic traditions. The difference between a human being and a beast becomes evident in these rules. A beast eats as required by its nature and does not know the seemly from the unseemly, for it has not been given the power of discrimination as humans have. Since this has been given to the human being, should one not use it, one does not do justice to the blessing of intelligence and discrimination and one has shown ingratitude for that blessing.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibn al-Mubarak: 'Abdullāh bin al-Mubārak, Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān. Born AH118/736CE, he was a famous jurispudent and a poet of note. He knew Ibrahim Adham, see Note 683. He died at Hit in western Iraq AH181/797-8CE.

⁶⁶¹ That is, they will stop eating out of respect for him.

THE MERIT OF EATING WITH FRIENDS AND BROTHERS IN RELIGION

Know that hosting friends to a meal is more meritorious than giving plentiful alms. It is related in the Traditions that three things are not counted against the servant (of God): that which one eats at the pre-dawn meal (when fasting); that which one eats when breaking the fast; and that which one eats with friends.

Ja'far bin Muhammad⁶⁶² (R) says: "When thou sittest with thy brothers at the dining cloth, in order to lengthen the time, do not hasten, for that amount will not be counted in the life span."⁶⁶³

Hasan Basri says: "Whatever a servant of God spends for the sustenance of himself, his mother, and his father must be accounted for, except that which is brought before friends."

Some of the great ones⁶⁶⁴ were accustomed to placing a great amount of food on the dining cloth when giving a dinner for the brothers. They would say: "It is related in the Traditions that there is no accountability for him who eats what is left over from the (meal of the) friends. I always want to eat of that after that which I have eaten with you."

The Commander of the Faithful, Ali, may God honor him, says: "I prefer placing a *sa'*⁶⁶⁵ of food before the brothers over freeing a slave."

In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High will say at the Resurrection: "O son of Adam! I was hungry and thou didst not feed me." They will say: "O Lord of Glory! How couldst Thou have become hungry when Thou art the Lord of all the universe?" He will say: "Thy brother was hungry; if thou hadst given him food, thou wouldst have given food to Me."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever feeds and gives drink to a brother Muslim so as to sate him, God Most High distances him from the fire of Hell (the distance of) seven trenches, the distance between each two trenches being five hundred years (of travel)." And he said: "The best of you is he who gives food."

⁶⁶² Ja'far bin Muhammad: Abu 'Abdullah Ja'far bin Muhammad bin 'Ali bin al-Husayn bin 'Ali Abi Talib, was given the epithet *al-Sādiq* (the Truthful). He was a learned and pious man, and the Ja'fari school of Religious Law is named after him. Among the Twelver Shiahs, he is regarded as the sixth Imam. He died at the age of 68 AH/48/765CE and is buried at Madinah.

⁶⁶³ That is, the time thus spent will be added to the life span.

⁶⁶⁴ "great ones" (*buzurgān*): or "saints."

⁶⁶⁵ *sa'*: A quantity equal to four *mudd*, or about five and one-third pints in volume, or to about five and one-third pounds in weight. (Steingass)

THE ETIQUETTE OF EATING FOR FRIENDS WHO VISIT ONE OTHER

Know that in this there are four rules:

THE FIRST (RULE) is that one should not aim to visit someone at the time of a meal, for it is related in the Traditions: "Whoever goes to eat someone's food uninvited, is a scoundrel and, in eating, he is a consumer of the unlawful." Moreover, if one accidentally comes at a mealtime, he should not eat without being invited. If he is invited to eat, and he knows that this invitation is not from the heart, he should not eat; for that is not appropriate. He should make excuses and refuse graciously. However, if he heads for the house of a friend in whom he has confidence and is privy to his heart, it is lawful. Indeed, this is the custom among friends.

The Messenger (S) and Abu Bakr (R) and 'Umar (R) went to the houses of Abu Ayyub Ansari⁶⁶⁶ and Abu al-Haytham⁶⁶⁷ and asked for food. This was as a favor to the host in this good deed, for they knew that each was desirous of this.

There was one of the saints who had three hundred and sixty friends. He was at the house of one of them every night. There was also one who had thirty friends. He was at the house of each one of them once a month. There was one who had seven friends. He was at the house of each one of them once a week. These friends were the capital (of the saints) instead of trade and property, and (the friends) were the enablers of the leisure and worship of (the saints). Indeed, when friendship with a co-religionist occurs, it is lawful that, if he is not at home, to eat of his food in his absence, for when the Messenger (S) went to the home of Burayrah,⁶⁶⁸ he ate of his food in her absence, as the Messenger (S) knew that she would be pleased by this. Muhammad bin Wasi⁶⁶⁹ (R) was one of the saints of humility. Together with his companions, he used to go the house of Hasan of Basrah (R) and they would eat of what they found (in Hasan's absence). When (Hasan) came back, he would be delighted with that. A group did the same in the house of Sufyan Thawri. When he

⁶⁶⁶ Abū Ayyūb Anṣārī: Khālīd bin Zayd al-Khazrajī. One of the Helpers, the Madinans who gave refuge to the Muslims fleeing from Makkah at the beginning of the Islamic era. The Prophet alighted at his home when he arrived at Madinah during the Emigration from Makkah. He participated in most of the military expeditions and died bravely at the walls of Constantinople (Istanbul), AH52/672CE. His tomb in a suburb of Istanbul is a place of pilgrimage and the special object of veneration in Turkey.

⁶⁶⁷ Abū al-Haytham: Abū al-Haytham bin al Tayyihān. He was one of the twelve men who swore fealty to the Prophet at the First Pledge of 'Aqabah and was present at the Second Pledge.

⁶⁶⁸ Burayrah: A maid bought by 'Ayishah and manumitted by her.

⁶⁶⁹ Muḥammad bin Wasi': A soldier who became an ascetic and a mystic. He lived in 'Iraq and died there AH120/738CE.

entered, he said: "This reminds me of the character of the forefathers, for they did thus."

THE SECOND RULE is that one should offer what is available when a friend comes to visit and not stand on ceremony. If one has nothing, one should not borrow. If one only has enough for the needs of his family, one should leave it for them. Someone invited 'Ali bin Abi Talib, may God honor him, (for a meal). He said: "I shall come under three conditions: that thou buyest nothing from the market, that thou providest whatever is in the house, and that thou givest thy family their portion in full."

Fudayl 'Iyad⁶⁷⁰ says: "People have cut off from each other because of ceremony.⁶⁷¹ If that could be eliminated between them, they would be able to visit each other without formality and elaborate preparation." A friend of one of the saints set forth an elaborate meal. The saint said: "When thou art alone, thou dost not eat like this; and when I am alone, I do not eat like this. When we are together, why all this display? Remove it from in front of us or I shall come no more."

Salman Farsi⁶⁷² (R) says: "The Messenger (S) commanded us to avoid ceremonious display and not to turn away from what is at hand." The Companions used to bring pieces of bread and dried dates to each other and say: "We do not know which is a greater offense: to consider abject that which is available and not offer it, or to consider it abject when offered to one." The prophet Jonah (A) placed some pieces of bread and some leeks which he had cultivated before his friends, saying: "If it were not for the fact that God Most High had cursed the ceremonious, I would have been more formal."

Some people had an argument. They sought Zechariah (A) to settle it among them. They went to his house, but did not find him there. They saw a beautiful woman and were astonished! What was a prophet doing luxuriating with such a woman? When they looked for him—he

⁶⁷⁰ Fudayl 'Iyad: Fudayl bin 'Iyād, Abū 'Alī. He was born at Marv (modern Mary in Turkmenistan) and started his life as a highwayman in Khorasan. He underwent conversion and traveled to Kufah (in Iraq) to study and became a noted mystic, dying at Makkah AH817/803CE.

⁶⁷¹ "ceremony" (*takalluf*): The expense and trouble of the ceremonious entertainment of others.

⁶⁷² Salman the Persian: Salmān Fārsī. The first Persian to embrace Islam (his Persian name was Firuzān), one of the Companions. It is said that he was kidnapped by bedouin tribesmen on the way to Syria and sold as a slave to a Jew, after which he went to Madinah. He became a "client" (*mawlā*) of the Prophet who declared that Salman was "of his family." He suggested the digging of the trench around the city of Madinah thereby confounding the attacking Quraysh at the battle of the Trench (AH5/627CE). He died in AH35/655CE and is buried in Mada'in, a suburb of modern Baghdad. His tomb is still a famous place of pilgrimage.

was working some place as a hired laborer—they found him eating. They talked to him, but he did not say: “Eat bread with me.” When he finished and rose, he came out of that field barefooted. They were much perplexed by these three acts. They asked: “What is this?” He said: “I have that beautiful woman so that I may preserve my faith and not lay my eyes and soul elsewhere. I did not invite you to eat because that food was my pay so that I could work. If I had eaten less, I would be deficient in my labors for them, and that is an obligation I have accepted. And I came out barefooted because there is enmity between the owners of these fields. I did not want to carry the earth of one field to another on my shoes.” From this, it is apparent that truthfulness and honesty in deeds take precedence over ostentation.

THE THIRD RULE is that one should not domineer over the host if one knows that this will be hard for him. If one chooses between two things, one should choose the easier, for the Messenger (S) did thus in all affairs. A person went to Salman and presented some barley bread and salt to him, saying: “If there were sweet fennel, it would be good.” Salman did not have anything, so he pawned a spouted pot for ablutions (to obtain some sweet fennel). When the man ate, he said: “*Praise be to God Who satisfies us with what He provides us.*” Salman said: “If thou hadst been content, my pot would not have been pawned for sweet fennel!”

However, in a place where one knows that it will not be any trouble and the person would be pleased, it is permissible to request things from him. Shafi’i (R) was staying in the house of a saffron trader in Baghdad. Every day the trader would first give a menu of different kinds of food to the cook. One day Shafi’i added in his own hand an item to the menu. When the saffron trader saw his guest’s writing in the hand of a bondmaid, he was delighted and so grateful that he freed the girl.

THE FOURTH RULE is that the master of the house should ask his guests what they would like if, in his heart, he is agreeable to accept their commands, for there is more spiritual reward in (satisfying) their desires. The Messenger (S) says: “For whoever rises to satisfy the desires of a brother Muslim, a thousand good deeds are recorded and a thousand thousand⁶⁷³ sins are erased from his record and he will be carried up a thousand thousand degrees and have a portion of three heavens: Paradise, Eden, and Eternity. However, asking whether one should bring something or not is disliked and blameworthy. Rather, one should bring what one has. If it is not eaten, it should be taken back.

⁶⁷³ “thousand thousand”: a million.

THE VIRTUE OF BEING A HOST

Know that what has been said above is about a person who goes somewhere uninvited. However, the rule for inviting guests is different. It has been said that when a guest arrives thou shouldst not stand on ceremony with him. If thou invite someone, do not hold back; that is, do whatever thou canst for him.

Many Traditions have come down to us about the virtue of having guests. It is the custom of the Arabs, when they are traveling and come upon each other's encampments, to alight. Doing justice to such a guest is important. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "There is no good in a person who is not a host." And he said: "Do not stand on ceremony with a guest, for then ye take him as an enemy. Whoever takes a guest as an enemy, is an enemy of God. And God has enmity for whoever has enmity for (Him)."

Borrowing for the guest who is a stranger and being formal with him is lawful; however, not for friends who go to visit each other (regularly), for that is a cause of breaking off (friendships). Abu Rafi',⁶⁷⁴ the client⁶⁷⁵ of the Messenger (S), says: "The Messenger (S) said to him: 'Tell such-and-such a Jew to lend us some flour until the month of Rajab, for a guest has arrived.' The Jew said: 'I shall not give it without a pledge.' I came and told (the Prophet). He said: 'By God, I am trusted in Heaven and I am trusted on earth! If he lends it, I shall return it. Now, take my armor and use that as a pledge.' I took it gave it as a pledge (for the flour)."

Abraham (A) would go out a mile or two looking for guests. He would not eat until he had found a guest. Because of his earnestness in this, that custom of hospitality endures at his tomb⁶⁷⁶ and until this age. It is never empty of guests every night. Sometimes, there are one hundred and twenty guests there. Villages have been given to (the shrine) as an endowment.

⁶⁷⁴ Abū Rāfi': other than that he was a client of the Messenger, no other information is available at present.

⁶⁷⁵ "client" (*mawla*): A client was a person under the protection of another, a practice resembling the ancient Roman institution of clientage. The client was originally a term for a slave, but also came to mean the status of a freed slave. Later it was applied to non-Arabs protected by Arabs in the Umayyad empire. Confusion is caused by this term because *mawla* can also mean "protector" or "helper," and is so used in the Quran.

⁶⁷⁶ At Hebron in Palestine.

THE ETIQUETTE OF GIVING AND ACCEPTING INVITATIONS

The traditional practice of a person who is inviting others is that he not invite other than the righteous because feeding is the giving of strength. To give a libertine food is to aid him in his corruption. One should invite the poor, not the rich, for the Messenger (S) says: "The worst food is the food of a feast to which the rich are invited and of which the poor are deprived." One must not forget one's relatives and close friends, for if one forgets them, it will cause their shying away. One should not issue invitations for the purpose of self-glorification and boasting. Rather, the thought should be to observe a Practice of the Prophet and to give comfort to the poor. One should not invite anyone for whom accepting the invitation would cause difficulties; that might cause sorrow. One should not invite anyone whom one would not like to accept (the invitation), for if he should accept, his food will be eaten with disgust, and this may cause a transgression.

As for the rules of acceptance, they are:

(*THE FIRST RULE*) is that one should make no distinction between the poor and the rich. One should not consider oneself above accepting the invitation of the poor, for the Messenger (S) used to accept the invitation of the destitute. One day Hasan bin 'Ali⁶⁷⁷ (R) passed by a group of poor people. They had some pieces of bread and were eating them. They said: "O (grand)son of the Prophet of God, join us." He alighted from his horse and joined them, saying: "God Most High does not like the haughty." After eating, he said: "Now you must accept my invitation for tomorrow." The next day he prepared fine dishes and sat with them eating.

THE SECOND RULE is that if one knows that the host will put him under some obligation and consider the repast a show of superiority, one should make some excuse to him and not accept. Indeed, one's acceptance will be taken as an acknowledgment of (the host's) superiority and (put one under an) obligation. In the same way, if one knows that there is some doubt (about the lawfulness) of the host's property, or there is something prohibited at that place such as a silken carpet of a silver censer, or there are pictures of living creatures on the walls or ceiling, or there will be listening to songs and flutes, or someone will be playing the buffoon, or use foul language, or young girls will

⁶⁷⁷ Hasan bin 'Ali: Al-Hasan bin 'Ali bin Abi Tālib. The first son of 'Ali and Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, he was born c. AH3 or 4/624-6CE and was a favorite of his grandfather. He is the second of the Twelver Shiah Imams and died AH49/665-6CE at the age of 45 or 46 at Madinah.

come under control of the men, one should not accept, for all of these are reprehensible. One should not be present at such a place.

In the same way, if the host is a heretic, a libertine, or an oppressor, or his intention is boasting and presumption, one must not accept. If one does and one sees one of the prohibited things there and cannot prohibit it, then one should leave.

THE THIRD RULE is that one should not be prevented by the distance of the road. Rather, whatever one can usually endure, one should endure (to attend). In the Torah, it is written: "Go a mile to visit the sick; accompany the bier for two miles; and go three miles to accept an invitation; and four miles to visit a co-religionist brother."

THE FOURTH RULE is that one should not be prevented by fasting. One should attend, if the host will not be upset, and content oneself with the pleasant odor (of the food) and good conversation, for this is the entertainment of the fasters. If one will be upset, then one should break his fast, for the wages of the delight of the soul of a Muslim are superior to much fasting.⁶⁷⁸ The Messenger (S) reproached the person who did so, saying: "Thy brother has taken much trouble for thee and thou sayest 'I am fasting'?"

THE FIFTH RULE is that one should not accept an invitation with the intention of relieving the appetite of the belly, for that is the work of beasts. Instead, one should make the intention of the emulation of the Practice of the Messenger (S) and one should make the intention of caution, for the Messenger (S) has said: "Whoever does not accept an invitation is in rebellion against God and His Prophet." This is why some have said: "Accepting an invitation is a religious obligation." One should also make the intention to honor one's brother Muslim, for it is related in the Traditions: "Whoever honors a believer has honored God Most High." One should also make the intention to give pleasure to his soul, for it is related in the Traditions: "Whoever gives delight to a believer has given delight to God Most High." One should also make the intention to visit the host, for visiting the believers is one of the great offerings." And, one should make the intention to protect oneself from backbiting, so that it not be said he did not come out of spite and arrogance.

These are the six intentions,⁶⁷⁹ each of which has a reward. The permissible actions of such intentions become among the offerings (to

⁶⁷⁸ The fasting that Ghazzali is referring to here is voluntary fasting, not the obligatory fasting of Ramadan.

⁶⁷⁹ In a note, HK suggests that the first part of the fifth rule, the prohibition against satisfying the appetite of the belly, is apparently counted separately as one of the six.

God). The great ones of faith endeavored to have an intention in each of their acts and rests related to religion, so that they wasted nothing of their breaths.⁶⁸⁰

THE ETIQUETTE OF ARRIVAL

As for the rules of etiquette concerning arrival, one should not keep others waiting, nor should one be in a hurry. One should take one's seat in a humble place and sit where the host indicates. If other guests give up the seat of honor to one, one should behave humbly. One should not sit facing the women's room. One should not look frequently at the place from which the food will be brought. As one sits down, one should greet the persons near one and enquire after their health.

If one sees something forbidden, one should object; if one is unable to change it, one should leave. Ahmad Hanbal has said: "If one spies a silver collyrium box, one should not remain." If one wishes to stay the night, it is the rule for the host to show one the toilet and the direction of formal prayer.

AS FOR THE ETIQUETTE OF PLACING THE FOOD —

THE FIRST RULE is that one should be quick. One of the ways of honoring a guest is not to keep him waiting. When a group is present (for the meal), but someone has not yet arrived, those present take precedence unless the absent one is a poor person who will be broken-hearted. In such a situation, delay with that intention is better.

Hatim Asamm⁶⁸¹ says: "Haste is from Satan except in five things: food for the guest, preparing the dead, the marriage of girls, repaying debts, and repentance for sins." Haste in a banquet is a Practice of the Prophet.

THE SECOND RULE is that one offer fruit first and that the dining cloth never be devoid of greens, for when there are greens on the dining cloth, it is related in the non-Prophetic traditions that angels come to attend. One must offer the most savory dishes first, so that they have

However, in the corresponding passage in *The Revival*, it is stated that there are five rules and they are much the same as in this presentation. Quite possibly, the number "six" is an error. It should be remarked that all of these enumerations, divisions, and headings in the text are not necessarily the work of Ghazzali himself. Later copyists and redactors doubtless had a hand in the present format of the text. Note that Ghazzali switches from "rule" (*adab*) to "intention" (*niyat*), when referring to them.

⁶⁸⁰ That is, they did not waste time.

⁶⁸¹ Hâtîm Aşamm (Hatim the Deaf): ʿAbd al-Rahmān Hâtîm bin ʿUlwān. He was an ascetic and mystic of Balkh, near modern Mazar-i Sharif in Afghanistan. He died AH137/754-5CE.

their fill of them. It is the habit of gluttons to take the heaviest foods first so that more of them can be eaten, but this is disliked. It is the custom of some to put down all of the food at once so that everyone can eat what he wishes. If one puts down a variety of foods, one should not remove them quickly, for it may be that one of the guests is not yet satisfied.

THE THIRD RULE is that one not put an insufficient amount of food (before the guests), for this is ungenerous. Neither should one offer too much, for that is arrogance. Instead, one should make the intention that there will be no account for the excess.⁶⁸² Ibrahim Adham,⁶⁸³ may God have mercy upon him, put a huge amount of food (on the dining cloth). Sufyan⁶⁸⁴ said: "Art thou not afraid that this is extravagance?" Ibrahim replied: "There is no extravagance in food."

One must first put out the food for the family so that their eyes will not always be on the dining cloth, for if there is nothing left over, they will complain bitterly about the guests, and this is a crime against the guests. It is not permissible for the guests to take what is left over home with them, as is the habit of some of the Sufis, unless the host gives them his express permission to do so—not because of embarrassment before them—or unless they know that he is agreeable (to their doing this) in his heart. Then it is lawful, with the condition that no injustice be done to one's eating companions. It is forbidden to take a great deal, and if the host is unwilling, it is forbidden. There is no difference between (doing) that and theft. It is also forbidden to eat that which one's eating companion has not eaten out of shame, not pleasure.

THE ETIQUETTE FOR DEPARTURE

As for the rules for departure, it is that one receives permission to leave. The host must accompany him to the door of the house, for the Messenger (S) has so commanded. The host must speak pleasant words and show an open face. If he has seen some defect in the guest, he should overlook it and conceal it with good behavior, for good behavior is superior to a multitude of offerings.

In the narratives, it is related that Master Junayd⁶⁸⁵ (R) was called by a child whose father had invited him. When they reached the gate of the house, the child's father did not admit him. (Junayd) went

⁶⁸² That is, what is left over may be taken away by the guests. (HK)

⁶⁸³ Ibrahim Adham: Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm bin Adham bin Maṣūr bin Yazīd bin Jābir al-Tamīmī al-ʿIjlī, a famous ascetic. Stories and anecdotes about his piety and asceticism are numerous. He was a member of the royal family of Balkh who became a Sufi. He died in the war with the Byzantines at Suqayn AH161/778CE.

⁶⁸⁴ Sufyan Thawri. see Note 397.

⁶⁸⁵ Master Junayd: Junayd, see Note 468.

back. The child came a second time and summoned him. He went (with him) and the father did not let him in. This was repeated four times to delight the heart of the child. He kept returning until the heart of the father was delighted; and (Junayd) was in the middle, idle. In each of the rejections and acceptances, there was a lesson for him that he perceived from another place.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁶ That is, from God.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCERNING THE RULES OF MARRIAGE

Know that marriage⁶⁸⁷ is one of the rules of conduct of the way of religion, just as eating is. As the way of religion has need of life and the survival of an (individual) human being, and life is not possible without food and drink, so in the same manner it is in need of the survival of the human species and its generation. This is not possible without conjugal intercourse. Thus, marriage is the cause of the origin of existence while nourishment is the cause of survival of that existence. Making marriage lawful is for this, not to satisfy carnal appetites. Rather, the carnal appetite that has been created (in us) was created also to be an agent and an importuner, in order to impel people to marriage so that the travelers of the path of religion may come into existence and walk the way of religion. All mankind has been created for the way of religion. About this, He said: *I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.* (Q. 51:56)

However more mankind increases (in number), so do the servants of the Divine Presence and the people of Mustafa⁶⁸⁸ (S). For the sake of this the Messenger (S) said: "Marry in order to increase; for on the Day of Resurrection I shall boast of you to other peoples and Prophets, even of a child miscarried from the womb of its mother."

Consequently, the spiritual reward of the person who strives to increase the population of servants (of God), so that they may enter the way of religion to serve Him, is great. This is the reason that the rights of the father and the teacher are great, for the father is the cause of one's existence and the teacher the cause of one's learning the way. For this reason, some have said that marrying is more meritorious than engaging in acts of supererogatory worship.

As it is clear that marriage is a part of the way of religion, it becomes important to describe the rules. Their description will come in three parts: First, the Benefits and Detriments of Marriage; Second, the Rules of the Marriage Contract; and Third, the Rules of Livelihood and Living after Marriage.

⁶⁸⁷ "marriage" (*nikāh*): the Arabic word used here refers principally marriage, but can be a euphemism for conjugal intercourse

⁶⁸⁸ "Mustafa" (*Muṣṭafā*): an epithet for the Prophet Muhammad meaning "chosen, selected."

**PART ONE: CONCERNING THE BENEFITS
AND DETRIMENTS OF MARRIAGE**

(THE FIVE BENEFITS OF MARRIAGE): Know that the merit of marriage is because of its benefits. There are five benefits in marriage:

THE FIRST BENEFIT is children. Because of children, there are four spiritual rewards:

THE FIRST SPIRITUAL REWARD is that one will have striven in that which is loved by God Most High: the existence of mankind and the continuity of its descendants. Whoever is acquainted with the wisdom of creation will harbor no doubt that this is loved by God Most High, for whenever the owner gives his servant the land suitable for cultivation, the seed for it, and a yoke of oxen, and the tools to plough it, and sends a representative with him to explain the cultivation, the servant—if he has any wisdom—knows what the intention of the owner is in this, even if the owner does not express it in words.

God, may He be exalted, created the womb and the penis, and appointed passion in man and woman. He created the seeds of offspring in the spines and breasts of men and women; the purpose of this is not hidden from any reasonable person. When a person wastes the seed and wards off from himself the appointed (passion) with a stratagem, without doubt he has turned away from the intention of his inner nature. For this reason, the forefathers and the Companions (R) abhorred dying as a bachelor to the point that when Mu'adh⁶⁸⁹ lost two wives in a plague and he himself had caught it, he said: "Give me a wife before I die. I do not want to die a bachelor."

THE SECOND SPIRITUAL REWARD is that one will have made the effort, in accordance with the Messenger (S), to increase his people in which he will take pride. For this he prohibited marriage with a barren woman, for she will not give one children. He has said: "A straw mat cast down in a room is better than a barren woman." And he has said: "A homely woman who has given birth is better than a barren beauty." From this it is clear that marriage is not to satisfy the carnal appetite, for a beautiful woman is more appropriate for that than is a homely one.

THE THIRD SPIRITUAL REWARD is that one obtains the supplications of one's offspring, for it is related in the Traditions: "Among the good things which do not end, one is a righteous child, for his supplications continue after the death of his father and mother and

⁶⁸⁹ Mu'adh: Mu'adh Jabal (see Note 399).

reach them." It is also related in the Traditions: "Supplications are displayed to the dead on platters of light and they find peace because of them."

THE FOURTH SPIRITUAL REWARD is that, should a child die before his father so that the parent suffers that sorrow, the child becomes an intercessor for him. For the Messenger (S) says: "It is said to the infant: 'Enter heaven!' He will fall into indignation and sorrow and say: 'Certainly I shall not enter without my mother and father!'" And the Messenger (S) seized someone's clothes and pulled him, saying: "As I am pulling thee, the infant will seize his mother and father and pull them into heaven."

It is related in the Traditions: "The children will gather at the gate of heaven and shout together, weeping, crying out for their mothers and fathers until (the parents) are permitted to come among them. Each child will take then the hand of his mother and father and lead them into Paradise."

One of the saints was cautious about marriage until he had a dream one night about the Resurrection. People were being tormented with thirst. He saw a group of children with gold and silver goblets in their hands giving water to the sufferers. Then he asked for water, but they would not give him any, saying: "Thou hast no child amongst us." When he awoke, he immediately married.

THE SECOND BENEFIT of marriage is that it fortifies one's religion and separates carnal appetite, which is the tool of Satan, from oneself. For this the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever has married has fortified one half of his religion; whoever has not married will usually not be able to restrain his eye from looking, and his soul from evil insinuations, even though he preserves his chastity. However, marriage must be done with the intention of procreation, not to satisfy one's carnal appetite; for complying with what is loved by the Lord because it is His command is more meritorious than doing so to satisfy the agent.⁶⁹⁰ The carnal appetite was created in order to be the exciter and the importuner, even though in it there is another underlying reason: a powerful pleasure has also been placed in it as a foretaste of the pleasures of the Hereafter, just as fire was created as a foretaste of the agony of the Hereafter. There is a rationale in everything that God Most High has created, but it is concealed except to the saints and theologians.

The Messenger (S) says: "There is a devil with every woman who appears. When a beautiful woman approaches one, he should go

⁶⁹⁰ That is, the carnal appetite.

home immediately and lie with his own wife, for in that sense all women are alike."

THE THIRD BENEFIT is the affection in seeing women and the repose that the soul obtains due to the society and amusement (one has) with them, which comfort is the cause of the renewal of the desire to worship, for diligence in worship brings fatigue that seizes the soul. This comfort renews the strength (to worship). 'Ali, may God honor him, says: "Do not restrain yourselves from ease and comfort completely, lest the heart become blind because of that."

The Messenger (S), during those times in which the revelations became a tremendous task for him, which his body did not possess the strength to support, would place his hand on 'Ayishah and say: "*Speak to me, O 'Ayishah!*" He wanted to strengthen himself in order to have the power to endure the burden of revelation. When he was returned to this world and his strength was restored, the thirst for that work overcame him and he would say: "*Comfort me, O Bilal!*" (with the call to formal prayer) and he would turn to formal prayer. It sometimes happened that a pleasing scent in his nostrils would strengthen him; for this he said: "*Three things have been made pleasing to me: sweet smells, women, and my pleasure in formal prayer.*" However, (he) showed partiality to formal prayer, which was the point (of that saying), for he said: "My pleasure is in formal prayer." Perfume and women are for the comfort of the body in order to have the strength for formal prayer and the pleasure that he obtained from that.

It is for this reason that the Messenger (S) prohibited the accumulation of worldly wealth. 'Umar (R) asked: "Then, what should we take from the world?" (The Prophet) replied: "*Let any of you take a remembering tongue, a grateful heart, and a believing wife.*" He said: "A remembering tongue, a grateful soul, and a devout wife; a devout wife is the companion of remembrance and gratitude."

THE FOURTH BENEFIT is that a wife takes care of the house, and performs the cooking, sweeping, and washing. If a man undertakes these, he will lag behind in knowledge, work, and worship. For this reason, a wife is a companion in the way of religion. And for this reason, Abu Sulayman Darani has said: "A good wife is not of this world; she is of the next world." That is, she gives thee the leisure to attend to the work of the Hereafter. 'Umar (R) says: "After faith, there is no blessing greater than a worthy wife."

THE FIFTH BENEFIT is that forbearance at the behavior of women, supplying their commissions, and keeping them on the way of religious law cannot be accomplished except with earnest effort, and that effort is one of most meritorious of the acts of worship. It is related in the

Traditions that providing for one's family is better than giving alms. The saints have said: "Lawful earning for one's children and family⁶⁹¹ is an act of atonement."⁶⁹²

Ibn al-Mubarak was on a military expedition in defense of Islam⁶⁹³ with a group of saints. Someone asked: "Is there any act which is more meritorious than that in which we are engaged?" They said: "We know of nothing more meritorious than this." (Ibn al-Mubarak) said: "I know. The person who has children and family and takes care of their welfare. At night, he rises from his sleep and, seeing his children with their (bed) clothes thrown off, covers them. That deed of his is superior to our expedition."

Bishr Hafi⁶⁹⁴ said: "Ahmad Hanbal has seven virtues which we do not have: one is that he seeks what is lawful for himself and his family, but I seek it just for myself." It is related in the Traditions that among the sins, there is one for which there is no expiation but by enduring the trouble of (having) a family.

The wife of a saint passed away. No matter how many proposals of marriage were made to him, he was not interested. He said: "My soul is more present in loneliness and I find more determination." He remained thus until one night he dreamt that the gates of heaven were open and some men were coming down one after another and going into the air. When they reached him, the first man said: "Is this that the unfortunate man?" The second said: "Yes." A third asked: "Is that the unfortunate man?" A fourth said: "Yes." The man became frightened and was too much in awe of them to ask them (what they meant). When the last one arrived, (the saint) asked him: "Who is this unfortunate person they are taking about?" He answered: "Thou; for before this, thy worship was among the acts of striving that were carried to heaven. It is now a week since thy name has been expunged from amongst the strivers. I know not what thou hast done." When he awoke, he immediately contracted a marriage so that he might be counted among the earnest strivers (in faith). These are all the benefits of marriage for reason of which one should desire to marry.

⁶⁹¹ Ghazzali routinely uses the word *'ayyāl* (family) as a euphemism for "women of the household," or "wife/wives." This is still a common practice in conservative areas of the Islamic world.

⁶⁹² Or "exchange" (*ibdāl*): thus, Khadiv-Jam's reading of the text. Aslam reads it as *abdāl* (both readings are possible), in which case the translation would be "...is an act of the saints" or "...is a saintly act."

⁶⁹³ *ghazw*: in a technical sense, it is a military campaign in defense of the faith.

⁶⁹⁴ Bishr Hafi: Bishr bin al-Ḥārith, Abū Naṣr. Born in Persia, he became a noted ascetic and was called al-Ḥāfi. He died at Baghdad AH227/841 CE.

(THE THREE DETRIMENTS OF MARRIAGE): As for the detriments of marriage, they are three:

THE FIRST DETRIMENT is that one may not be able to seek what is lawful, especially in such an era.⁶⁹⁵ For the sake of one's family, one may fall into seeking the lawful and doubtful. This is a cause of the destruction of religion for himself and his family. No excellence compensates for this, for it is related in the Traditions: "The person will be kept near the scales and he will have good deeds, each one like a mountain. Then, they will ask him: 'From what didst thou provide for thy family?' and he will be caught in this. And for this reason, all of his good works will vanish. Then, they will cry that this is that man whose family consumed all of his good deeds, and he been caught in difficulty."

It is also written that: "The first person who will grapple with a person at the Resurrection will be his wife. She will say: 'O Lord God! Give us justice from him, for he gave us unlawful food and we did not know it. He did not teach us what was proper to learn so that we remained in ignorance.'" Therefore, anyone who dies not have property or an inheritance, or a lawful means of earning, should not marry except at the time when he is absolutely certain that he will commit adultery if he does not.

THE SECOND DETRIMENT is that attending to a family is not possible except with a good nature and patience with respect to their nonsense, with toleration of their distress, and with the setting about the arrangement of their affairs. Not everyone can do this. It may be that he distress them and become sinful because of that, or leave (them) lost. It is related in the Traditions: "He who flees his family is like a runaway slave. His formal prayer and fasting are not accepted until he returns to them." In sum, (maintaining) the soundness of the self is an obligation upon every person. It is preferable for the person who cannot cope with his own self that he not undertake the responsibility of the self of another.

Bishr Hafi was asked: "Why dost thou not marry?" He replied: "I am afraid of this verse: *And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner.*" (Q. 2:228) Ibrahim Adham was asked: "Why dost thou not marry?" He replied: "How can I marry when I do not need a wife. How can I deceive a woman with myself?"

THE THIRD DETRIMENT is that the soul and thought become absorbed in the arrangements of family matters and are hindered from

⁶⁹⁵ "in such an era": Ghazzali is referring to his own era, of course, but the problems seem to have persisted to the present day.

remembering God Most High, the Hereafter, and the making of provision for the Hereafter. Anything that distracts thee from the remembrance of God Most High is a cause of thy destruction. For this, God Most High said: *O ye who believe, let not your wealth nor your children divert you from the remembrance of God.* (Q. 63:9) Consequently, it is better for any person not to marry who does not have the strength that the Messenger (S) had not to be diverted by family affairs from God Most High and who knows that, if he does not marry, he will always be engaged with remembrance and worship and be safe from the unlawful. However, there is no difficulty for the person who is able to live by lawful means and who is certain of his own nature and kindness and who knows that marriage will not divert him from the remembrance of God Most High. If he marries, he will continue to engage in the remembrance (of God).

PART TWO: CONCERNING THE MANNER OF CONTRACT AND ITS RULES; THE QUALITIES ONE SHOULD LOOK FOR IN A WOMAN

(THE CONDITIONS OF MARRIAGE): As for the conditions of marriage, they are five:

FIRST: A guardian (for the woman): for without a guardian, the marriage is not valid. The ruler is the guardian for whoever does not have one.

SECOND: The agreement of the woman, unless she is a virgin. In that case, if the father or grandfather gives her (away as a bride), there is no need for her consent. It is also preferred that (the matter) be presented to her. If she is silent, that is sufficient (to indicate consent).

THIRD: Two just witnesses must be present. It is preferred that a number of righteous folk attend and that it not be restricted to two persons. If the two male (witnesses) are chaste so that no corruption (of theirs) is known to man or woman, the marriage is valid.

FOURTH: That the words *ijāb* (assent) and *qabūl* (acceptance) be pronounced by the guardian and the bridegroom, or their representatives so that they are plainly (heard). They must also say the word *nikāḥ* (marriage) or *tazwīj* (marrying off), or the Persian equivalents. It is the traditional practice for the guardian to speak (on behalf of the bride). After that, the sermon is read: "*In the name of God and all praise belongs to God. I have given so-and-so in marriage with this marriage*

portion."⁶⁹⁶ The husband says: "*In the name of God and all praise belongs to God.* I have accepted this marriage with this marriage portion." It is to be preferred that he see the woman before the marriage contract so that, if he approves, he may make the contract, for there will be a greater expectation of affection. His aim and declared intention for marriage must be having offspring and restraining the eye and soul from unsuitable things. The whole of his purpose should not be passion and pleasure.

FIFTH: The woman must have the qualities that make marriage with her lawful. There about twenty qualities for which marriage is unlawful: a woman who is married to another; a woman who is observing the waiting period;⁶⁹⁷ an apostate; an idolatress; a heretic who does not believe in the Resurrection, God, and the Prophet; one of the Libertines who consider men and women associating together and not praying lawful and who say: "We are certain that there will be no punishment for this"; a Christian or a Jew descended from an ancestor whose Christianity or Judaism originated after the mission of our Messenger (S); a slave while the man is able to provide the marriage portion for a free woman or able to restrain himself from adultery; the property of this man (the husband), in part or in totality;⁶⁹⁸ a relative or in the prohibited degrees to the man; someone made unlawful because of sharing milk from the same woman;⁶⁹⁹ unlawful because of being an in-law, as when the woman has been the wife of one of his sons, or he has previously married and also had intercourse with her daughter, granddaughter, mother, or grandmother, or the woman had been married to his father or son, or the man has four other wives and she would be the fifth.

The marriage would not be lawful if he is already married to her sister, or paternal or maternal aunt, for including her among them is not proper as there is between the two women a relationship which, if one were male and the other female, marriage would not be possible. A woman whom he has already divorced three times or bought and sold three times will not be lawful until she has married another man. (He cannot marry) a woman with whom he has exchanged curses; or while either the man or the woman is in a state of consecration for the greater or lesser Pilgrimage; or if the female is an orphan and a child: it is not

⁶⁹⁶ "marriage portion": *kābīn*. See Note 703.

⁶⁹⁷ *'iddat* (Arabic form: *'iddah*): the period a woman must wait after divorce or the death of a spouse before contracting a new marriage. According to Q. 2:234, it is four months and ten days. Its purpose is to ensure that she is not with child by her previous husband.

⁶⁹⁸ That is, she is a slave and the property of the husband, or he is her part owner.

⁶⁹⁹ Nursing from the same woman establishes a relationship that puts them in the category of the prohibited degrees (*maḥram*) to each other, just as a brother and sister would be. Such a marriage is unlawful.

proper to marry her until she achieves puberty. Marriage with all of these women is void. These are the conditions of the lawfulness and validity of marriage.

THE QUALITIES FOR MARRIAGE OF WOMEN: As for the qualities that are the Practice of the Prophet to be looked for in women, they are eight:

THE FIRST QUALITY is chastity—and this is the foundation—for should an unchaste woman act treacherously with his property, the husband's mastery of his household will be in confusion. If she should betray him with her body and the man remain silent, it will be counted as a deficiency in honor and religion. He will become disgraced and reproached by people. If he remains silent, his life will always be troubled. If he divorces her, it may be that he will miss her; but if one is good to the unchaste, it will be a greater calamity. For, however much it is thus, it is better to divorce, unless one is enamored of her; for when someone complained about the unchasteness of his wife, the Messenger (S) said: "Divorce her." The man said: "I love her." The Prophet said: "Keep her, for if thou divorce her, thou too wilt fall into evil ways."

It is related in the Traditions: "Whoever desires a wife for property and beauty will be deprived of both. If he wants her because of religion, the aim of property and beauty will be achieved by themselves."

THE SECOND QUALITY is a good disposition, for a shrewish wife is ungrateful and a termagant and she will be uncontrollable. Life with her will be troubled, and she will be the cause of evil in religion.

THE THIRD QUALITY is beauty, for it stimulates affection. That is why seeing her before marriage is the practice of the Messenger (S) who said: "In the eyes of the women of the Helpers,⁷⁰⁰ there is something⁷⁰¹ that the soul detests. Whoever wants to marry one of them should first see her." It was also said: "Every marriage which is concluded before viewing ends in sorrow and regret."⁷⁰² The Messenger (S) has said: "One should seek a wife for (her) religion, not her beauty." The meaning here is that one should not ask for a woman solely because of her beauty and

⁷⁰⁰ "the Helpers" (*Anṣār*): the Helpers of Madinah. Those who supported the Prophet and Islam in Madinah.

⁷⁰¹ "something" (*chīẓ*): in the corresponding passage in *The Revival*, Ghazzali uses the word *shayn* which means "disfigurement, marring, dishonoring," etc. It is interesting to note that the Arabic for "thing" is *shay*. In writing, the difference between the two words *shayn* and *shay*² is minuscule (a single dot or a *hamzah*). This coincidence might invite some interesting speculations about the history of the text, although the word *shayn* is not unknown in classical Persian.

⁷⁰² This statement, not directly attributed to the Prophet here, appears to be proverbial.

without regard to her piety; but it does not mean that one should not take her beauty into consideration.

However, if someone's motive for marriage is having children and to observe the Practice of the Prophet only, not taking into consideration beauty, then this is a matter of asceticism. Ahmad Hanbal chose a one-eyed woman over her sister who was beautiful because it was said that the one-eyed woman was more intelligent.

THE FOURTH QUALITY is that the marriage portion⁷⁰³ be light, for the Messenger (S) said: "The best of wives are those whose marriage portion is lighter and whose appearance is better." Making the marriage portion heavy is disapproved. The Messenger (S) made some marriages with ten dirams, and never gave more than four hundred dirams for his own offspring.

THE FIFTH QUALITY is that she not be barren, for the Messenger (S) said: "A straw mat in the corner of a room is better than a wife who does not bear children."

THE SIXTH QUALITY is that she be a virgin, for she will be closer in affection. Most of those who have had a husband remain attached to them. Jabir⁷⁰⁴ (R) sought a marriage with a previously married woman.⁷⁰⁵ The Messenger (S) said: "Why didst thou not marry a virgin so she could play with thee and thou with her?"

THE SEVENTH QUALITY is that she be of a respectable lineage, and that lineage be one of religion and righteousness, for without (such an) origin, she may be untutored and possess an unpleasant character, the nature of which may spread to her offspring.

THE EIGHTH QUALITY is that she not be too closely related by blood, for it is related in the Traditions that the children of such a union may be weak. Perhaps the reason is that carnal appetite is weaker with respect to relatives.

These are the qualities of women. As for the guardian who gives his own daughter in marriage, he is obliged to look out for her interests.

⁷⁰³ "marriage portion" (*kabin*): or "dowry." However, in Islamic law, the marriage portion is what the husband is obliged to pay his wife in the event of divorce without just cause. In Arabic, it is called *mahr al-ʿarūs*. See also Note 1380.

⁷⁰⁴ Jabir (*Jābir*): The son of a man slain at the battle of Uhud, he embraced Islam and accompanied the Prophet on many military expeditions. He died in Madinah AH78/697-8CE at the age of 94. (Hughes)

⁷⁰⁵ "previously married woman" (*thayyibah*): a previously married woman whose marriage has been consummated.

He should choose some one who is suitable, and beware of ill-tempered, ugly, and insolvent men. If they are not suitably matched, then the marriage is not permissible. It is not permissible to give her to someone dissolute. The Messenger (S) said: "The generations of him who gives his child to someone dissolute will be cut off." And he said: "Marriage is bondage; be careful about to whom thou givest thine own child as a bondservant."

PART THREE: CONCERNING LIFE WITH WOMEN FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE MARRIAGE TO THE END

Know that since it is clear that marriage is a pillar among the pillars of religion, one must observe the rules of conduct of religion in it. If not, there would be no difference between the marriage of human beings and copulation of animals. So, in this, one must observe twelve rules:

THE FIRST RULE is the marriage feast. This is a confirmed Practice of the Prophet. The Messenger (S) said to 'Abdur-Rahman 'Awf when he had married: "Give a feast, even if it is only with a single sheep." And if one does not have a sheep, whatever amount of food one places before his friends is a marriage feast. When the Messenger (S) married Safiyah,⁷⁰⁶ he made a feast of barley meal and dates. So, however much is possible must be done to honor the act of marriage. It ought to be held within the first three days (after the marriage ceremony). If there is a delay, not later than the (end of the) first week.

It is also the Practice of the Prophet to play tambourines and publicize the wedding and to display joy at it, for the dearest of creation is mankind and marriage is the opening of the gate for their creation. So, this joy is in its proper place. Singing and dancing and (playing) tambourines at such a time are of the Practice of the Prophet.

It is related that Rabi'⁷⁰⁷ the daughter of Mu'awwidh said: "On the day following the night that I was married, the Messenger (S) came

⁷⁰⁶ Safiyah: Safiyah bint Huyayy bin Akhtab. The eleventh wife of the Prophet, she was born at Madinah of the Jewish tribe of the Banu al-Nadir. When the tribe was expelled from Madinah in AH4/625-6CE because of accusations of helping the Quraysh against the Muslims, her family settled in Khaybar. Two or three years later, when she was about 17, she was married Kinanah bin al-Rabi'. She was taken prisoner in the fortress of Khaybar when it fell to the Muslims AH7/628CE. Her husband was executed and she was married to the Prophet. Despite these tumultuous circumstances, she became devoted to him and was on good terms with the Prophet's daughter Fatimah. She died AH50/670CE or AH52/672CE.

⁷⁰⁷ Rubayya' the daughter of Mu'awwidh: She was a woman of the Ansār (the Helpers of Madinah) who participated in battles by nursing the wounded and helping to carry off the dead. The Prophet attended her wedding in Madinah, and Ghazzali refers to the incident

(to us). Servant girls were playing the tambourine and singing. When they spied him, they started to sing praises of the Messenger (S) in verse. The Messenger (S) said: 'Go back to what ye were singing before.' He did not permit them to sing his praises." It is not seemly to mix the serious with the playful. Praise of him should be purely serious.

THE SECOND RULE is that one should engage in good behavior with women. The meaning of good behavior is not that one should not displease them; rather, one should suffer and tolerate their distress. One should be patient with their absurd talk and ingratitude. It is related in the Traditions that: "Women have been created of weakness and vulnerability. The remedy for their weakness is silence, the remedy for their vulnerability is making their home a prison."

The Prophet says: "Whoever is patient with the ill-temper of his family (wife) is given as many spiritual rewards as Job (A) was given. For any wife who is patient with the ill-temper of her husband, there is as much spiritual reward as there is for Asiyah, the wife of Pharaoh."⁷⁰⁸ The last thing which the Messenger (S) was heard to say at the time of his death was his whispering: "Keep performing formal prayer, behave well with bondservants,⁷⁰⁹ and be patient (*Allāh, Allāh!*) with the talk of women. They are prisoners in your hands. Make life good for them."

The Messenger (S) used to bear the anger and the bile of women. One day the wife of 'Umar (R) answered him angrily. 'Umar said: "O vile woman! Art thou talking back to me?" She said: "Yes, for the Prophet is better than thou and his wives talk back to him." 'Umar said: "If that is the case, God help Hafsah,⁷¹⁰ for she will be humbled!" At that moment he saw Hafsah, his own daughter and the wife of the Prophet (S), and said to her: "Beware that thou dost not talk back to the Messenger (S), and do not be deceived by (what) the daughter of Abu Bakr (does),⁷¹¹ because the Prophet loves her and tolerates her."

One day, one of his wives struck the Messenger (S) on the chest in anger. Her mother scolded her, crying: "Why didst thou do that?" The Messenger (S) intervened and said to the mother: "Overlook it, for they do more than that and I overlook it." And he said: "*The best of you is the best of you with his family, and I am the best of you to my family.*"

of the women's singing, but he does not go into detail. The women were singing an ode about the battle of Badr in which there was the verse: "We have among us the Prophet who knows what is to happen tomorrow." When he heard that verse, he ordered them to stop, saying that only God knows what will happen tomorrow.

⁷⁰⁸ Asiyah (*Āsiyah*), the wife of Pharaoh: the wife of the pharaoh of the story of Joseph. One of the four perfect women. She is referred to in the Quran (66:11), but not by name.

⁷⁰⁹ "bondservants" (*bandagān*): or "slaves."

⁷¹⁰ Hafsah (*Hafṣah*), the daughter of 'Umar bin al-Khattab and a wife of the Prophet.

⁷¹¹ 'Umar is referring to 'Āyishah, the daughter of Abu Bakr.

THE THIRD RULE is one should joke and play with them and not be moody; one should approach them at their own level. No one has made more pleasantries with his family than the Messenger (S), to the point that he raced with 'Ayishah to see who would win. The Messenger (S) won. They raced another way and 'Ayishah (R) won. The Messenger (S) said: "One to one, one washes the other." That is, they were even.

One day, he heard the sound of Africans⁷¹² dancing. He said to 'Ayishah: "Wouldst thou like to see them?" She said: "I would." He approached her and lowered his hand so that 'Ayishah placed her chin on the Prophet's (S) forearm and watched (them) for a long time. The Messenger (S) said: "O 'Ayishah, is not this enough?" She said: "Be still." He said it to the third time, then she said that it was enough.

'Umar (R) says with his usual seriousness and severity in affairs: "A man must be like a child with his women; and when they want mastery from him, then he must be like men." It has been said that: "A man should be smiling when he enters and quiet when he comes out; he should eat whatever he finds and not ask for what he does not find."

THE FOURTH RULE is that joking and play should not reach the point where one loses one's dignity completely. One should not abet them in vain passions. Indeed, when one sees something that is against virtue or the religious law, he should chastise them. Should he overlook it, they will ridicule him. *Men are the set up over women.* (Q. 4:34) The man must always be dominant. The Messenger (S) said: "Wretched is (the man who is) the slave of his wife." It has been said that: "One should consult with women and then do the opposite of what they say." In reality, a woman's self is just like thy self, which, if thou permittest it, will go out of control and exceed all limits. Mending it will be a difficult task.

In short, there is a weakness in women, the treatment for which is forbearance; and a crookedness, the treatment for which is diplomacy or punishment. A man must be as proficient as a physician who observes each treatment at the proper time. In all, there must be patience and tolerance, for it is related in the Traditions that: "The similitude of woman is that of a rib. If thou wouldst want to straighten it, it would break."

THE FIFTH RULE is that one should observe moderation in talk about honor and restrain (them) from anything that may be the source of

⁷¹² "Africans" (*zangīyān*): the Persian term refers to the dark-skinned inhabitants of eastern coastal regions and northeastern Africa, the part of black Africa of greatest geographical experience for the medieval Muslims. The word appears to be related to Zanzibar, although it was more often used generally, to designate the people of Ethiopia and the eastern coast of Africa.

detriment. As much as one can, one should not let them go outside, or beyond the roof and gate. One should not let them be seen by anyone not of the prohibited degrees of relationship. One should not let them see such a person. One should not let them be seen by men through embrasures or windows, for all calamities arise from the eyes, and that does not happen within the house; rather, from embrasures, windows, and roofs. It is not proper to be lenient about this. But one should not be suspicious for no reason, find fault, and be excessively jealous, or overdo investigation into the heart of affairs.

Once, when the Messenger (S) returned from a journey, it was nearly night. He admonished (the men, saying: "Let no one go to his house suddenly this night. Wait until tomorrow." Two men disobeyed; each one saw disallowed things in his home. The Commander of the Believers, 'Ali, may God honor him, says: "Do not be excessive in guarding the honor of your women, for people will learn about it and talk rudely about them."

The basis of guarding the honor of women is preventing them from seeing (men) of the prohibited degrees.⁷¹³ The Messenger (S) asked Fatimah (R): "Which are the best women?" She replied: "Those whom men do not see and those who do not see men." The Messenger (S) was delighted and embraced her: "*Offspring, one of the other.*" (Q. 3:34)

Mu'adh⁷¹⁴ struck his own wife for looking out of a window. He saw the woman taking a biting out of an apple and giving the rest to a male bondman. He beat her.

'Umar (R) said: "Do not cloth women in fine garments so that they may sit at home. If they have fine clothes, the desire to go outside will be born in them." At the time of the Messenger (S), there was an edict permitting them to go well covered to the mosque. They would stand in the last row (for obligatory formal prayer), but during the time of the Companions this was interdicted, for 'Ayishah (R) said: "If the Prophet could see how the women are now turning themselves out, he would not have let them go to the mosque." Today, it is preferable that they be prohibited from attending mosques, assemblies, and being seen, except for elderly ladies wearing old veils in which there are no gaps. Harm more often arises from being seen and from gatherings. It is not permissible for women to pass wherever there is a fear of turmoil.

A woman should guard her eyes, for a blind man once entered the house of the Messenger (S) where 'Ayishah and another woman were sitting. They did not get up (to leave), saying: "He is blind." The Messenger (S) said: "If he is blind, ye have your sight."

⁷¹³ "the prohibited degrees" (*nā mahram*): See Note 303.

⁷¹⁴ Mu'adh: Mu'adh Jabal (see Note 399).

THE SIXTH RULE is that one be generous in providing for them and not be tightfisted. At the same time, one should not be extravagant, but know that the spiritual reward of providing for one's family is greater than that for giving alms. The Messenger (S) says: "Of the dinar spent in defending the faith, the dinar spent in freeing a slave, the dinar spent for the destitute, and the dinar spent in providing for one's family, the most meritorious and most profitable is that spent upon one's family."

One must not eat any delicious food alone. If one wants to do so, one should do it out of sight. One should not describe in front of them a food which one will not provide. Ibn Sirin says: "One should have sweetmeats or other sweets prepared once a week, for it is not generous to totally preclude them." One should eat one's meals with the family, around the dining cloth, when guests are not present, for it is so good to do so that "God Most High and the angels bless the house and its inhabitants when they eat together."⁷¹⁵

The main thing is that that which is spent be lawfully obtained; for there is no treachery or oppression greater than one's nourishing them with that which is unlawful.

THE SEVENTH RULE is that one must instruct one's women in the religious knowledge of all that is necessary for them, such as the performance of formal prayer, purification, the menses, etc. If they are not taught this, the women are obliged to go outside and enquire (about these things). However, if the man teaches his wife, it is not permissible for her to go out without permission. If the man stints in this, he is in rebellion (against God), for God Most High says: *Ward off from yourselves a fire.* (Q. 66:6) Protect yourselves from hell!

She must learn this much, that if the menstrual flow stops before the setting of the sun, she must make up the noon and mid-afternoon obligatory formal prayers. If it ceases before the rising of the sun, the sunset and early evening obligatory formal prayers should be made up. However, most women do not know this.

THE EIGHTH RULE is that if there are two wives, one must treat them both equally, for it is related in the Traditions that: "Whoever inclines to one wife will come on the Day of Resurrection half crooked." One should observe equality in gifts and in spending the night with the. However, it is not obligatory in affection and sexual intercourse.

The Messenger (S) spent each night with (a different one) of his wives. However, he loved 'Ayishah the most and would say: "Lord God! I strive (to be just) with everything I possess, but my heart is not under my control."

⁷¹⁵ Both AA and HK put this statement between quotation marks, but do not attribute it.

If a person is fed up with one wife and does not want to embrace her, he must divorce her and not keep her fettered.

The Messenger (S) wanted to divorce Sawdah, for she had become older. She said: "O Prophet of God, I have given my turn to 'Ayishah. Do not divorce me so that I may remain among thy wives until the Resurrection." He did not divorce her, but spent two nights with 'Ayishah and one night with each of his other wives.

THE NINTH RULE is that when a wife is disobedient and does not obey her husband, she should be called to obedience with kindness and leniency. If she does not obey, at night separate thy bedclothes and in them turn thy back upon her. If she does not obey, keep the bedclothes apart for three nights. If this does not produce the desired result, then one should beat her, but not on the face, nor very hard, lest something be broken. If she is deficient in performing formal prayer or other religious obligations, it is lawful to be angered with her for a month or as long as (necessary), for the Messenger (S) was angry with (and separated himself from) all of his wives for a month.

THE TENTH RULE is about lying with them. One should turn away from the direction of formal prayer and, at the beginning, please her with talk, play, kisses, and embraces, for the Messenger (S) has said: "A man should not fall upon a woman like a beast. Before intercourse there should be a messenger." He was asked: "What is that messenger?" He said: "A kiss."

When one is about to begin, one should say: "*In the name of the All-High, the All-Powerful. God is greater, God is greater, God is greater.*" And it is better if one recites the chapter commencing *Say, He is God, the One!* (Q. 112). Then he says: "*O God! Ward off Satan from us and ward off Satan from that which we have been provided.*" It is related in the Traditions that whoever recites these things—and if a child results—it will be safe from the devil.

At the moment of ejaculation, one should think in his soul *Praise be to God who hath created man from fluid and hath made for him kindred by blood and kindred by marriage.* (Q. 25:54)⁷¹⁶ Then, when he has ejaculated, he should be patient until his wife also experiences orgasm, for the Messenger (S) has said: "Three things are of the infirmity of a man: one is that he sees someone whom he likes but cannot remember his name; another is that his brother does him some good service but he rejects it; and the other is that he engage in sexual

⁷¹⁶ The Quranic verse from which this is taken actually starts with *He it is* instead of the *praise be to God* that Ghazzali uses.

intercourse before kisses and embraces, and when he has accomplished his need, he does not wait until the woman also accomplishes hers."

It is related from 'Ali, may God honor him, Mu'awiyah,⁷¹⁷ and Abu Hurayrah that sexual intercourse on the first night of the month and the last night (of the month) and the night of the full moon is an abomination, for during those nights devils attend at the time of intercourse. One must restrain oneself from intercourse at the time of the menses. However, it is permissible to sleep naked. It is not proper (to have intercourse) before the greater ablution of menstruation. After one act of intercourse, if one wishes another, one should wash oneself. While in a state of impurity, if one wishes to eat something he should perform the lesser ablution. If one wishes to go to sleep, he should also perform the lesser ablution, even if he is still in a state of impurity. That is the Practice of the Prophet. Before performing the greater ablution, one should cut the hair or nails, so that they, in a state of impurity, not be separated from one.⁷¹⁸

It is preferred that semen reach the womb and not return. If one practices withdrawal,⁷¹⁹ the correct view is that doing so is not unlawful. A man asked the Messenger (S): "I have a bondservant who is a maid and I do not want her to become pregnant and not be able to perform her work." He said: "Practice withdrawal, for if it is ordained, the child will come into existence itself." Later the man returned (and said): "A child has been conceived." Jabir says: "*We used to practice coitus interruptus while the Quran was being revealed. We practiced withdrawal while the revelation was occurring and we were not prohibited from that.*"

THE ELEVENTH RULE concerns the coming of a child. When it is born, one must make the call to obligatory formal prayer in its right ear and the call to assemble in ranks in the left ear. In the Traditions, it is related: "The child of whoever does this will be safe from childhood diseases."

One must give it a good name. It is related in the Traditions that the most beloved names to God Most High are 'Abdullah (Servant of God) and 'Abd al-Rahman (Servant of the Merciful). It is the Practice of

⁷¹⁷ Mu'awiyah: Presumably Mu'awiyah bin Abū Sufyān, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty (rgd. AH41/661CE to AH60/680CE). He moved the capital to Damascus. Viewed quite differently by Sunni and Shiah historians, he consolidated the enormous expansion of the Arab empire from the Atlantic to India. With the exception of Cyprus, some territories in the Caucasus, and parts of Palestine, all of his empire remains predominantly Muslim to the present day. In a sense, he transformed the Islamic empire into an Arab empire.

⁷¹⁸ That is, the whole body is in a state of ritual impurity. Cutting the hair or nails before purification would leave the cuttings impure. It is better to perform that task after purification.

⁷¹⁹ "withdrawal": the reference is to *coitus interruptus*.

the Prophet to bestow the name upon the child as soon as it is born. Slaughtering a sheep for the newborn is a confirmed Practice of the Prophet: for a daughter, one sheep; for a son, two; but if there is only one, it is permitted. 'Ayishah (R) has said: "The bones of the sacrificed animal should not be broken."

It is the Practice of the Prophet that when a child is delivered, the mouth should be opened with something sweet. On the seventh day, the head should be shaved and silver or gold given in alms equal to the weight of the hair.

One must not be displeased if it is a girl, nor should one show too much joy if it is a boy, for one does not know in which one the goodness lies. The girl may be more blessed and there may be greater spiritual reward in her. The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will be kind to him who has three daughters or three sisters and suffers their distress and arranges their affairs because of his kindness to them." Someone said: "O Prophet of God, if there are two?" He said: "If there are two, it is the same." Another asked: "If there is one?" He replied: "If there is one, it is the same." And the Messenger (S) also said: "Whoever has one daughter is afflicted; whoever has two daughters is burdened; and whoever has three daughters, O Muslims, aid him, for he shall be in heaven with me as though we were two fingers." That is, close.

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever buys the first fruits in the market and takes them home, they are like alms. He must begin with the girls and then the boys, for whoever gladdens the heart of a girl; it is as though he were weeping out of fear of God Most High. The body of whoever weeps out of fear of God Most High will be unlawful for the fire.

THE TWELFTH RULE is that, if possible, one should not divorce; for among all permitted things, God Most High abhors (most) divorce. In short, giving sorrow to someone is not permitted except under necessity.

When it is necessary to divorce, do not pronounce it more than once, for three times at one time is repugnant. It is unlawful to pronounce a divorce during the menses. And in a pure state, it is also unlawful after intercourse.

One should be apologetic in divorce, in the way of kindness, and not divorce with acrimony and disdain. One should give her presents to please her soul, and one should never disclose her secrets to anyone. Nor should one disclose for what fault one has divorced her. A man was asked: "Why art thou divorcing thy wife?" He answered: "One cannot reveal the secrets of one's own wife" After he had divorced her, he was asked: "Why didst thou do it?" He replied: "What have I to do with another woman that I should talk about her?"

THE RIGHTS OF A HUSBAND OVER HIS WIFE

That which has been discussed is about the rights of wives over husbands, but the rights of a husband over his wife are greater, for she is in reality bound to the man. It is related in the Traditions that if prostration to someone other than God were lawful, wives would have been commanded to prostrate themselves before their husbands.

The rights of a man over his wife are: that she sit in the house and not go out without his permission, or go to the door, or on the roof. She should not mix excessively with the neighbors or talk too much. She should not go to them unnecessarily. She should not say anything about her husband except that which is good. If there is some rudeness between them—in association or intercourse—she should not relate it (to others). She should be zealous in all of his affairs with respect to his aims and pleasure. She should not misappropriate his property and she should seek his advice in all things. She should maintain her compassion. When some one knocks at the door, she should reply in a manner so that the visitor not recognize her and she should veil herself before all of her husband's acquaintances so that they would not know her again. With her husband, she should be satisfied with what there is and not demand more. She must give her husband's rights precedence over the rights of her relatives. She must always keep herself clean to be suitable for conversation, intercourse, and association. She must do whatever service she is capable of and not be vain about her own beauty with him. She should not be ungrateful for any good things he does for her, nor say: "What hast thou ever done for me?" She should not continually look for faults without cause and not become angry and not demand buying and selling or divorce, for the Messenger (S) says: "I looked into hell. I saw more women there. I asked: 'Why is it thus?' They replied: 'They find fault much with their husbands and are ungrateful to them.'"

CHAPTER THREE: CONCERNING THE RULES OF EARNING AND TRADE

Since the world is the way station of the provisioning for the Hereafter and a human being needs food and clothing, and such things are not possible without earning, one must learn the rules of conduct for work. A person who devotes all of himself to the work of the world is unfortunate; a person who devotes all of himself to the Hereafter and trusts (in God) is fortunate. However, the most just balance is that one busy oneself in both one's livelihood and the next life; but the object must be the next life, and the livelihood must be for the tranquillity of the next life.

As for that which must be learned about the orders and rules of earning a livelihood, they are explained in five parts: First, Concerning the Virtue and the Spiritual Reward of Earning; Second, Concerning the Prerequisites of Transactions; Third, Concerning the Maintenance of Fairness in Transactions; Fourth, Concerning the Benevolence Behind Fairness; and Fifth, Concerning the Maintenance of the Compassion of Religion in Mutual Transactions.

PART ONE: CONCERNING THE VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL REWARD OF EARNING

Know that earning one's livelihood lawfully in order to keep oneself and one's family not dependent upon others and in self-sufficiency is one of the earnest strivings in the way of religion and is more meritorious than numerous acts of worship. One day, the Messenger (S) was sitting with his Companions when a strong young man passed by them at the first light of morning. He was on his way to his shop in the market. The Companions said: "It is a shame his early rising was not in the way of God Most High!" The Messenger (S) said: "Speak not thus, for if he is going in order to make himself, his father and mother, or his wife and children independent of other people. He is on the path of God Most High. But if he is going for the glory of this world, boasting, and power, then he is on the path of Satan."

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever seeks what is lawful from the world so that he may be independent of people, or his neighbors and relatives, is performing a good deed. He will come on the Day of Resurrection, his face shining like the full moon." And he said: "The truthful merchant will stand on the Day of Judgment together with the truly righteous and the martyrs." And he said: "God Most High loves the craftsman." And he said: "The most lawful thing is the earnings of the craftsman when he follows (good) counsel." And he said: "Engage in business, for the sustenance of people is nine tenths from trade." And he

said: "For whoever opens the door of begging to himself, God Most High opens seventy doors of poverty to him."

Jesus (A) saw a man and said to him: "What art thou doing?" The man replied: "I am worshipping." (Jesus) asked: "Whence didst thou get thy food?" He said: "I have a brother who arranges for my food." Jesus said: "So thy brother is more pious than thou art." 'Umar (R) said: "Do not cease working and say: 'God Most High, give me my livelihood.' God Most High will not send down gold and silver from heaven." And Luqman the Wise counseled his son, saying: "Do not stop earning, for the religion of whoever is poor and in need (of the help) of the people is shallow, his intelligence weak, and his manliness nullified. People look upon him with contempt."

Someone asked one of the saints: "Is the worshipper superior or the honest merchant?" He answered: "The honest merchant, for he is in a struggle (*jihād*). Satan has his sights set upon him by way of the weighing⁷²⁰ and the giving and taking (of business). He opposes him." 'Umar (R) says: "There would be no better place for death to take me than in the market seeking what is lawful for my family."

Ahmad bin Hanbal was asked: "What dost thou say about the man who sits in the mosque worshipping and who says: 'God Most High Himself will cause my sustenance to appear.'" He replied: "Such a man is ignorant and does not know the Religious Law, for the Prophet (S) says: 'God Most High has bound my sustenance in the shadow of a spear'; that is, in waging war."

Awza'i⁷²¹ saw Ibrahim Adham carrying a bundle of firewood on his shoulders.⁷²² He said: "How long will this earning of thy livelihood last, while thy brothers are rendered prosperous from thy pains?" He answered: "Be still, for in the Traditions it is said that God Most High will necessarily give a place in paradise to whoever rises to seek lawful (earnings) in a situation of humiliation."

QUESTION: If someone asks about that which the Messenger (S) said: "*I was not given the revelation: 'Amass wealth and be one of the merchants'; rather, I was given the revelation: 'Extol thy Lord with praise and be one of those prostrating themselves (before Him) and worship thy Lord until there comes to thee the Certainty.'*" (Q. 15:98-99) He said: "I was not told: 'Amass wealth and be one of the merchants'; rather (I) was told: 'Praise (Him), be one of the prostrators, and worship

⁷²⁰ That is, the temptation to give false weights for goods.

⁷²¹ Awza'i: Awzā'i, Abū 'Amr 'Abd al-Rahmān bin 'Amr (747 - c. 775CE). Born in Baalbek and died in Beirut. A founder of a legal system in early Islam. (Fihrist)

⁷²² Literally: "his neck."

God Most High until the end of thy life.”⁷²³ Therefore, this is proof that worship is more meritorious than engaging in business.

[ANSWER]:⁷²⁴ The answer is that thou knowest that for anyone who has a sufficiency of means for himself and his family, it is not contested that worship is better than engaging in business. For, if anyone has more than that which is sufficient for himself and his family, there is no merit in earning more. On the contrary, there is loss and attachment to the world: that is the beginning of all sinning. And for that person who does not have property, but receives a stipend from the property of beneficial agencies and religious endowments, not engaging in business is preferred. These are for four (types) of person:

(1) Either the person who is busy studying subjects that will have a religious benefit for the people such as the study of the Religious Law, or a worldly matter such as the study of medicine; (2) or the person who works for the people in the judiciary, endowments, or beneficial agencies; (3) or the person who has the inside him an opening to the states of the ecstasis of the Sufis; (4) or the person who engages in private worship and acts of external worship in a house of dervishes endowed for such persons. For such persons, it is better that they not engage in trade.

Therefore, if their sustenance—without begging or incurring obligations—will be from the hands of the people and it is an era in which the people are eager (to perform) such goodness, not engaging in trade is preferable. There was a person from among the saints for whom there were three hundred and sixty friends; he would always be engaged in worship and the guest of one of them every evening. His friends were the facilitators of this worship and they kept him free of anxiety. This is a cause for the opening of the gates of goodness to the people. There was (also) the person who had thirty friends and during each month, he would be with one of them one evening.

But if the times be such that the people have no eagerness to offer one sustenance without begging and enduring degradation, engaging in a trade is to be preferred. Begging is a great sin and only becomes lawful when absolutely necessary—except for the person whose degree is great and his knowledge very beneficial and his degradation in the search for sustenance will be little. In that case, we may say: “His refraining from trade is better.”

As for the person who keeps his soul to himself and outwardly engages in earning, such earning is better for him, for the essence of all

⁷²³ This is Ghazzali's translation and paraphrase.

⁷²⁴ From the AA text.

acts of worship is the remembrance of God Most High. In the midst of earning, one's soul can be with God Most High.

PART TWO: CONCERNING THE STUDY OF EARNING SO THAT IT MAY BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH RELIGIOUS LAW

Know that this topic is long and we have discussed all of it in the books of religious jurisprudence. Therefore, in this book we shall discuss only that much which is most necessary, so that everyone may know that. If something becomes difficult, he may enquire about it. Whoever does not know this may fall into the unlawful and unlawful profit, without realizing that he should have asked about it.

Most business dealings are of six types of transaction: sale, profit and usury,⁷²⁵ forward buying, rent and hire, loan, and commercial partnership. Let us relate all of the conditions of these contractual agreements:

THE FIRST CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT IS A SALE. Acquiring the knowledge of selling is a religious obligation; no one can pass over this. 'Umar (R) used to go the market wielding a scourge and say: "Let there not be anyone doing business in this market who has not learned the religious law of selling, for he will fall into usury whether he wants to or not."

And know that selling has three elements: The first is the buyer and the second the seller—who are called the parties to the contract.⁷²⁶ The next is the merchandise or service, which is called "that which is contracted".⁷²⁷ And the third is the utterance of the word "sale".

THE FIRST ELEMENT is that of the parties to the contract. A merchant must not make a transaction with five classes of people: a child, a madman, a slave, a blind person, and one whose property is obtained unlawfully.

As for the child who has not reached puberty, in the opinion of Shafi'i (R), his transaction of selling is not valid, even if done with the permission of his guardian. The case of a mad person is the same. Whatever one receives from them is by way of surety, in case it be lost. They owe no indemnity for whatever one gives them if it be lost by them.

As for the slave, his buying and selling without the permission of his master is invalid. It is not lawful for a butcher, baker of bread, grocer, or the like to do business with him until he has heard the order of his

⁷²⁵ "usury" (*ribā*): excessive profit.

⁷²⁶ "the parties to the contract" (*ʿāqid*): that is, the buyer and the seller.

⁷²⁷ "that which is contracted" (*maʿqūd ʿalayhi*): that is, the goods or merchandise to be sold.

master, has received information (of that order) from a just person, or it is well-known in that town that (the slave) has permission (from his master to conduct such transactions). If (a merchant) receives something from (the slave) without such permission, (the merchant) is responsible for it. However, if (a merchant) gives something to (the slave), (the slave is not liable for it) until he has been freed.

As for the blind person, his transactions are void unless conducted with a sighted representative. However, he is liable for whatever he receives, for he is responsible and free.

As for the persons whose sustenance is unlawfully obtained, such as male and female coquettes,⁷²⁸ oppressors, thieves, usurers, wine-drinkers, musicians and (professional) mourners, perjurers, and acceptors of bribes—transactions with all of these are not lawful. However, if one does so and learns the truth (afterwards), that property which (in itself) was not forbidden is lawful. But, if one learns that the property was not in fact the other's (to sell), then, (the transaction) is nullified. If there is doubt, one should investigate. If more of the property was lawful and the unlawful less, then the transaction is valid, but not devoid of doubtfulness with regard to its legality. If more of it was unlawful and the lawful less, we do not say that the transaction is manifestly invalid, but this doubt remains: that it is close to unlawfulness and the peril is great.

As for Christians and Jews, transactions with them are valid, but copies (of the Holy Quran) and Muslim slaves should not be sold to them. If they are warriors, weapons should not be sold to them, for these transactions are invalid according to the obvious doctrine and (the seller) becomes a rebel (against God).

The Libertines are atheists.⁷²⁹ Transactions with them are invalid, for their blood and property is impure. Indeed, they can have no property. Marriage with them is unlawful. The rule concerning them is that of the rule concerning the apostate. By the criteria of the seven doubts that we have cited in the Prolegomena, whoever considers drinking wine, sitting with women not of the prohibited degrees, or not performing the obligatory formal prayers lawful is an atheist. Transactions and marriage with such a person are not binding.

⁷²⁸ Literally: Turks (*Turkân*). During the classical period of Persian literature, the Turks were famous for their beauty and pale skin. Hence, they were much admired and prized as entertainers and sexual partners. Compensation often figured in their dealings. Such money would not, from the religious point of view, be lawfully earned.

⁷²⁹ "Libertines (*Abāḥatīyān*) are atheists": See Note 165 about the Libertines. To describe their beliefs, Ghazzali uses the word *zindīq*, here translated as "atheists." The English word expresses his strong disapproval of them, although the term can also refer to dualists, fireworshippers, heretics, the impious, etc.

THE SECOND ELEMENT is the property with which the transaction is concerned. There are six conditions which must be observed:

The first condition is that it not be unclean. The sale of dogs, swine, dung, bones, wine, pork, and oil made from carrion is invalid. However, (the sale of) pure oil into which something unclean has fallen is not forbidden. The same is true for unclean clothing. However, a bladder of musk or the eggs of the silkworm may be sold, for the truth of the matter is that both are clean.

The second condition is that it have some benefit, for that is the desired end. The sale of mice, snakes, scorpions, and insects of the earth is invalid. The profit for a conjuror⁷³⁰ from a snake has no basis. The sale of a single grain of wheat or something similarly trivial in which there is no honest purpose is also void.

However, the sale of cats, honeybees, panthers, lions, wolves, and anything in which there is a profit in their pelts or their slaughter is lawful. The sale of parrots, peacocks, and gorgeous birds is lawful. Their usefulness lies in the comfort derived from admiring their beauty or listening to their songs. However, the sale of lyres, harps, or viols is invalid, for their uses are forbidden. They should be destroyed.

As for images made of clay so that children may play with them, if they be in the form of animal, their sale is null and void and the money from them is unlawful. They should be smashed. However, forms of trees and plants are lawful. As for trays and cloth upon which there are pictures, their sale is lawful. Spreading such cloth or making pillows (of it) is lawful, but wearing clothes (so decorated) is not lawful.

The third condition is that the goods be the property of the seller. The sale of other people's property is unlawful, even if it is that of one's husband, father, or child. If someone should sell something and then receive permission (from the owner) to sell it, the sale does not become valid, for the permission must precede (the sale).

The fourth condition is that the thing sold must be capable of being transferred. The sale of a slave who has run away, fish in a pond, and birds in the air, a foal in the belly of the mare, of the semen (in the testicles) of a (stud) horse is invalid, for none of these can be delivered immediately. (The sale of) hair on the skin of an animal or milk in the udders (of animals) is invalid, for the delivery of such milk will entail mixture with the fresh milk produced (after the moment of sale).⁷³¹ The sale of something pawned without the permission of holder is invalid. The sale of a female slave who has borne (her owner) a child is invalid, for delivering her (to another) is not lawful. The sale of a female slave

⁷³⁰ *musha'bid*: lit: juggler, conjuror. Here it refers to a snake charmer.

⁷³¹ The same would apply, of course, to the aforementioned hair on the skin of an animal, as it would continue to grow after the sale and consequently not be part of the original transaction.

who has a small child without the child, or the sale of the child without the mother is unlawful, for it is unlawful to separate them.

The fifth condition is that the exact goods, in amount and description, be made explicit. However, it may happen that the exact identity is not known, for some one may say: "I shall sell thee a sheep from all of this flock, or a piece of linen from among these pieces of linen—whichever thou wishest." Such a sale is invalid; rather the (sheep or piece of linen) must be separated by pointing out, then sold. If one says: "I shall sell thee ten yards of this land, starting from whichever direction thou desire," the sale is also invalid.

Moreover, it is necessary to know the amount when it is visible to the eye. If someone says: "I shall sell (it) to thee for the same sum for which such-and-such a person sold his own clothing, or an equal weight of gold or silver"—without knowing the amount—it is not lawful. But, if one says: "I shall sell this wheat to thee either with this amount of gold or silver," and he sees it, (the sale) is lawful.

Now, the knowledge of the description (of goods) is obtained by sight. The sale of something that is unseen or seen after a long time and, for example, has been altered by the passage of time, is invalid. The sale of the fine linen called *tawzi*⁷³² in sackcloth, rolled cloth, and wheat in the ear is invalid. When buying a female slave, one must look at her hair, her hands, and feet, and that which is the custom of the slave dealers to display. If one does not see everything, the sale is not valid. However, the sale of walnuts, almonds, beans, pomegranates, and eggs, is correct, even though they are concealed with an outer covering. The advisable thing is that such things be sold as they are. The sale of both unripe beans and unripe walnuts in their shells is lawful out of necessity. The sale of the drink (called) *fuqqa*⁷³³ is invalid, for it is concealed, but drinking it is lawful as a perquisite.⁷³⁴

The sixth condition is that the sale of whatever is bought be made while it is in one's possession. One must first obtain it, then sell it.

THE THIRD ELEMENT is the contract; there is no escape from putting it in words. One must say: "I have sold this to thee." And (the buyer) must say: "I have bought it," or "I have given thee this for that."⁷³⁵ And the other says: "I have received it," or "I accept it," or in words from which the meaning of the sale is plainly understood, if it is not

⁷³² *tawzi* so called from the name of the place of its manufacture, Tawz, near Kazerun in southern Iran.

⁷³³ *fuqqa*: a drink made from grain or fruit that was bottled and allowed to lightly ferment; hence, it was concealed from view. The Arabic root suggests "popping, crackling"; hence, "bubbly."

⁷³⁴ "as a perquisite" (*bi-dastūrī*): something thrown in extra (in a transaction); something placed upon something else, as when buying a pound of sugar an apple is placed on top. (Steingass)

⁷³⁵ As in barter.

explicit. So, if the words are not spoken between (the parties of the transaction)—in addition to the giving and receiving—as has now become the custom, it is not lawful. It is preferred that in the sale of trifles we call this a sale—for the sake of leniency—for this has become usual and the (position of the) school of Abu Hanifah (R) is thus.

Some of the companions of Shafi'i (R) also called this an *educed* agreement⁷³⁶ in the Shafi'ite school. They have issued a decree about this. It is not improbable (that this was) for three reasons:

First: The need for it had become general.

Second: It is supposed that during the time of the Companions this was also the custom. If the requirement for the utterance of "sale" had been customary, it would have been a difficulty for them. It would have been related and not remained concealed.

Third: It is not impossible that an *act*⁷³⁷ may replace the word (of agreement)—as when it becomes the custom—as is apparent in gifts. There was no pressure for a requital or concession for those (gifts) which were brought to the Prophet and the Companions. This is the way it has been in all eras and when property is obtained without a verbal utterance where there is no requital, according to the rule of custom, and by act only. It is not impossible even where there is a requital. Moreover, with respect to a gift, customarily, there is no difference between a little and a lot. However, in the case of the sale of something valuable, such as a house, real estate, a slave, a horse, or expensive clothing, it has been the custom to sell with a verbal utterance. If the sale is not declared by word in the case of such items, it is not in accordance with the custom of the forefathers and the property is not transferred.

As for bread, meat, fruit, and the small amounts of things which one purchases, there is reason to relax the rule on the grounds of custom and need. There are degrees between trifles and valuables to know, such as which is a counted a trifle and which is not. It is not possible to apportion these, as it is difficult. One should observe the way of caution.

Know that if, for example, some one buys a donkey-load of wheat without uttering the "sale," this is not regarded as a trivial thing and without the formal sale, it does not become his property. However, eating it and making use of it is not forbidden. Because of its transfer, acceptance is obtained, even though ownership is not obtained. If someone invites a guest and gives him to eat of it, it is also lawful, for the delivery by the owner is evidence in the context of the situation, that he has made it lawful to (the purchaser), but on the condition of compensation. If he were to say plainly: "Give this food of mine to thy guest and then give (me) the compensation later," it would be lawful and

⁷³⁶ "educed" (*mukharraj*): that is, educed or extracted from the Traditions of the Prophet.

⁷³⁷ "act": such as a nod of agreement or a gesture with the hands.

the compensation would be obligatory. Since the act was proved by this, that was the result. Not performing the (formal) sale affects (the goods) in that they do not become (the buyer's) property, so that if he wishes to sell them to someone else, he cannot. And should the owner wish to reclaim them, before they are eaten, he may—just as the food is placed on the eating cloth before the guest!

Know that a sale is valid with the condition that there be no other conditions. If one says: "I buy the firewood on condition that thou deliver it to my house," or "I buy this wheat on condition that thou grind it into flour," or with some other condition, the sale is voided except under six conditions: one, he sells it with the condition that something is given to him as security; or he takes an oath; or so-and-so gives a surety; or the price will paid later and not demanded until a specified time: or both (buyer and seller) have the right to cancel the sale for three days or less—more than that is not lawful; or he sells a male slave with the condition that he be a secretary or have knowledge of some craft. These conditions do not nullify the sale.

THE SECOND CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT IS PROFIT, and profit comes in precious metals and in victuals. As for the sale of precious metals, two things are forbidden:

One is that selling on credit is not lawful; gold must be sold for gold, or silver for silver. So long as both are not present before the separation of one from the other, possession is not to be taken of them. Also, if they are not received in public, the sale is invalid.

The other is that when something is being sold for something of its own kind, an increase is forbidden. It is not right to sell a sound dinar for a dinar and a grain of filings; nor is it right that a sound dinar be sold at a higher price for a dinar that is adulterated. Rather, bad, good, broken, and sound are equal to each other (of the same quality). Therefore, if one purchases a garment⁷³⁸ for a sound dinar and then sells that garment (back) to that person for a dinar and a grain of filings, (the transaction) is valid and the desired end is achieved. It is not right to sell gold in which silver has been mixed for pure gold or for pure silver, or for minted coins.⁷³⁹ Rather, something (else) must be staked. The same is true for every golden vessel the gold of which is not pure. It is not right to sell for gold a pearl necklace in which there is gold. Cloth embroidered with gold thread should not be sold for gold, unless it be in the amount that if placed in fire nothing of (the gold) would be retrieved, which would be the object.

⁷³⁸ Or cloth. The word *jāmah* can mean both.

⁷³⁹ Literally, coins struck in Herat (*zar-i hirāwīyah*), which were generally accepted as legal tender in that period.

As for comestibles, it is not proper to sell them for comestibles on credit—even if they are of different kinds. Rather, both must be receipted in public. If they are of the same kind, such as wheat for wheat, (the sale on) credit is still not right; neither is it (right) for an increase (in amount). Rather, they must both be of the same measure. If they are equal in weight, it is not lawful.⁷⁴⁰ Rather, equality must be observed in everything, for that is the prevailing custom.

Nor is it proper to sell a sheep to a butcher (in return) for meat, wheat to a baker for bread, or sesame and shelled walnuts to an oil-presser for oil. All of these are incorrect and the sales are not valid. But if there is no transaction of sale, and one gives (one) to receive (the other), its consumption is lawful for him, though it is not his property and he cannot sell it. It is lawful for the baker to take possession of the wheat, but not to sell it (to another). For the purchaser, the wheat is the baker's. For the baker, the bread is the purchaser's. (But) one may claim it (from the other) whenever one wishes. Even if they have agreed to make it lawful⁷⁴¹ for each other, this is not sufficient. For, if one should say: "I made this lawful for thee with the condition that thou make it lawful for me;" one (condition) would nullify the other.

If this condition is not plainly stated, but one says: "I make it lawful," since he knows that the other party in the transaction has this condition in his mind and would not give him a *mann* of wheat without it, the legitimization would not result—in the Hereafter—between him and God Most High, for this agreement is with the tongue, not with the heart. Any agreement that is not with the heart is not valid in the Hereafter. However, if he should say: "I have made this lawful for thee, whether thou makest it lawful for me or not," and have the same thought in his mind that he articulates, it is valid. Then, if the other does the same thing too, it will likewise (be lawful). If they each do not legitimize the transaction, and if the value and quantity of both are equal, they are relieved of this litigation in this world and there will be no retribution in the next. However, if there is a difference (between the goods exchanged in value or quantity), then litigation in this world and punishment in the next world are to be feared.

And know that it is not proper to sell whatever is made from foodstuffs for that food, even if they are equal. It is not right to sell whatever comes from wheat, such as flour, for wheat. It is not right to sell grapes for vinegar and honey, nor to sell milk for cheese, nor

⁷⁴⁰ That is, the sale must be made by volume, not by weight.

⁷⁴¹ "make it lawful" (*bi-hill*): This is a quittance of claim upon something. Saying "I make this lawful for you," means that one has surrendered one's rights and claims. Debts and obligations may be informally canceled with this phrase. *Bi-hill kardan* is the act of saying: "I have made this lawful (*halāl*)."
Bi-hill kardan may be replaced with the abstract noun *bi-hilli*.

strained curds for clarified butter. Selling grapes for grapes, or fresh dates for fresh dates on a par is not correct until they become raisins or (mature) dates. There are many lengthy details in these matters, but that much which we have said is necessary to learn so that if something should occur that one does not know, he knows that he does not know it and he must enquire about it. For, if one does not know this much which we have stated, he would know that he must ask about it and be cautious so as not to fall into the forbidden without excuse. The quest for knowledge is a religious obligation as is acting upon that knowledge.

THE THIRD CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT IS FORWARD BUYING.⁷⁴²

There are ten conditions in this that must be observed:

THE FIRST CONDITION is that at the time of making the contract one say: "This silver, gold, cloth, or whatever it may be, I give for the forward purchase of a donkey-load of wheat—for example—and the description of the wheat is thus and thus." Every quality that might possibly alter the value, be desired, or not customarily tolerated should all be stated so that it is plain. The other says: "I accept it." If he says: "I have bought something of this description from thee," instead of articulating the words "forward buying," it is also lawful.

THE SECOND CONDITION is that whatever is given not be given in excess; rather, one should make the weight and amount known so that if there is a need to return it, one may know that it is as it was given.

THE THIRD CONDITION is that the capital⁷⁴³ should be turned over during the meeting for making the contract.

THE FOURTH CONDITION is that it be something bought forward be made known by a description of its condition, such as grain, cotton, wool, silk, and animal meat. As for whatever is compounded of whatever kind of thing so that the quantity of each ingredient is not known, such as perfume; or is combined from whatever things, such as a Turkish bow; or is manufactured, such as shoes, stockings, sandals, and cut arrows; the forward purchase of such things is invalid, for they do not accept description. It is correct that the forward buying of bread is lawful, even though it is compounded with salt and water, but the amount of each is not the point and does not cause ignorance (of the true condition).

THE FIFTH CONDITION is that if it be bought on time, that time must be specified. One should not say: "Until the grain crops ripen," for that is variable. If one says: "Until New Year's Day"⁷⁴⁴ or "the second of

⁷⁴² "forward buying": *salam*.

⁷⁴³ "capital" (*ra's-i māl*): that is, the payment agreed upon.

⁷⁴⁴ The Iranian New Year (*Naw Rūz*), still celebrated in Iran and Afghanistan, occurs at the vernal equinox. Unlike the Islamic calendar which is lunar, the Iranian calendar is solar, so the New Year always occurs towards the end of the third week or the beginning of the fourth week of March.

the New Year," it would be specific. If one says: "until the month of Jumādā,"⁷⁴⁵ it would be valid and it would be ascribed to the first month (of the two of that name).

THE SIXTH CONDITION is that the thing given for forward buying will be received at the appointed time. If fruit is sold forward until a time during which it has not ripened, it is not valid and void. If most of it be ripe, it is valid. If because of some misfortune it is late (in ripening), if one wishes, one may grant an extension, or one may cancel (the sale) and take back the payment.

THE SEVENTH CONDITION is that one should state how far (the goods) may be delivered, to a city of a village; for it is possible that a dispute arise leading to litigation.

THE EIGHTH CONDITION is that no source be specified. One should not say the grapes of this garden or the wheat of that field, for this thereby voids (the transaction).

THE NINTH CONDITION is that one should not give something for forward buying which is rare or unobtainable, such as large pearls the like of which are not found, or a beautiful slave girl with a child together, or such like.

THE TENTH CONDITION is that one should not offer for forward buying any foodstuff when foodstuffs are capital. One should not offer barley, wheat, millet, etc. for forward buying.

THE FOURTH CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT IS RENTING AND HIRING. It has two elements: the price and the use.

As for the makers of the contract and the utterance of the contract, it is the same as we have said with regard to sales.⁷⁴⁶

The remuneration must be made known, as we have said with respect to sales. If an edifice is hired out for repair, (the contract) is invalid because the repair is unspecified. If one says that he will pay ten dirhams for the repairs, it is still void, for the work required for the repair is unspecified. To hire a flayer for sheepskins or to hire a miller for an amount of bran or flour is invalid. It is not proper to make his wages anything that will be obtained from his labor as a hired person.

If one says: "I give thee this shop for a dinar each month," it would be void because the length of the lease is not made known. One must say: "One year or two years," so that all will be clear.

As for the use, know that it is lawful to hire someone for any work which is lawful and is known, and that causes pains (for the worker) and which causes him exertion. Therefore, there are five conditions in this that must be observed:

⁷⁴⁵ Jumada I is the fifth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. See the calendar in the Translator's Preface.

⁷⁴⁶ That is, the First Contractual Agreement discussed above.

THE FIRST CONDITION is that the job have an amount and a price, and require effort. If someone hires a cook to set a shop in order, or a tree on which to dry cloth, or an apple to smell, all of these are void, for they do not specify an amount. It is like the selling of a single grain of wheat.

If one is a broker with rank and pomp by whose single word a sale is completed and is hired with the condition that he speak once and complete a sale, the sale is invalid and the fee is unlawful, for there was no effort in this. Rather, the fee of broker or agent is lawful when there are negotiations and complications. Then, no more than the standard fee is necessary. However, to take 5% as has become the custom, and that on the amount of the property rather than the amount of the effort, is unlawful. Consequently, the property of brokers and agents so acquired is unlawful. The agent can escape this iniquity in two ways:

One is that he accept whatever is given to him and not haggle over (the fee), except over the amount of his pains, not the amount of the value of the goods.

The other is that he state beforehand: "When I sell this, I shall want a dirham," for example, or "a dinar," and the other party agrees (to this condition). He should not say: "I want 5% of the price," for that is unknown and the sale price (not yet) determined. If he says it that way, it is invalid and does not incur a liability other than the usual fee.

THE SECOND CONDITION is that the fee is necessary when there is a profit, and the capital is not counted. If one rents a garden of a vineyard to pick the fruit, or if one rents a cow as long as it gives milk, or makes a contract for half of a cow to take half of its milk, all of these are invalid, for both the fodder (for the cow) and amount of milk are unspecified. However, the hiring of a woman as a wet nurse is lawful because the purpose is the well-being of an infant, and the milk is assumed, just as the ink of the scribe or the thread of a tailor. This amount of assumption for a job is lawful.

THE THIRD CONDITION is that pay be given for work that is capable of being delivered and is lawful. If a feeble person is engaged for a job that he cannot do, it is void. If a menstruating woman is hired to sweep a mosque, it is invalid because this act is forbidden. If a person is hired to extract sound teeth, to cut off a healthy hand, or to pierce the ear of a child for earrings, (know that) all such transactions are invalid, and accepting payment for them is forbidden. So, too, is that which knaves draw upon their hands that are pierced with needles, and ink introduced (into the punctures).⁷⁴⁷ The fees charged by the hat makers who embroider silk caps for men, the fees of tailors who make cloaks of rich

⁷⁴⁷ That is, tattooing.

undulated silk and silken gowns of brocade and silk for men are unlawful and paying for these is invalid.

In the same way, if someone hires a person to teach him ropedancing, it is unlawful. Whoever stands watching him is a partner in his peril (of punishment), for if people did not watch him, he would not be performing that. Whoever gives something to a ropedancer, a gamester, or a knife-thrower—occupations that are dangerous and without benefit—is in rebellion (against God). In the same manner, the pay given to jesters, musicians, professional mourners, and satirizing poets is prohibited.

The fee of a judge for judgment and the fee of a witness for testimony are unlawful. However, if the judge writes the official record, then it is lawful for him to accept a fee for this labor, for he is not required to write it. However, this is under the condition that he does not prevent others from writing it. If he prevents (the others) and writes it by himself and then demands ten dinars or a dinar for a record which would take an hour to write, it is unlawful. However, if he does not prevent others and stipulates that he will not write it for less than ten dinars, it is lawful. If another writes the record and he signs it and asks for something for this, saying: "I was not required to sign this," it is unlawful, for the correct thing is that the amount set is for that which is necessary. So, if there is no labor involved (in the signing), that much labor is like a *sir*⁷⁴⁸ of wheat, which is of little value. The value lies in that it is the handwriting of the judge. Taking fees for anything which comes from rank and rule is not proper.

However, the fee of the pleader to the judge is lawful with the condition that he not represent a person whom he knows to be guilty. Indeed, the pleader to a judge must be a truthful person who knows that (the client) is in the right, or not know that he is guilty, with the stipulation that he not lie or misrepresent and not aim to conceal the truth. Instead, he should repudiate that which is false. So, when the truth is plain, he should be quiet. However, the denial of something which, if he agreed to it would nullify some right, is lawful.

Moreover, (the fee for) taken from both sides by a mediator who mediates between two persons is not lawful, for he cannot do the work of both parties in a dispute. However, if he works for one party and labors hard, this has a value and his fee is lawful, on the condition that he not utter a lie—that is prohibited—nor misrepresent, nor conceal anything which is true (and relevant) from both parties. Nor should he falsely panic (them), so that by such means he may make a settlement when, if the truth of that matter were known, (one of the parties) would not settle. Usually, such methods do not produce settlement. Therefore, the fees

⁷⁴⁸ *sir*: a weight equal to 15 *mithqals*; about 75 grams.

taken for most mediation, which is not devoid of favoring, force, lies, and misrepresentation, is unlawful.

When the mediator knows that the truth favors one party, it is not lawful for him to persuade the party in the right by deception to settle for less than what is his just right. But if he knows that (one party) will be tyrannical, then it is permitted for him to use trickery to frighten him out of such a course of action.

Whoever is dominated by integrity knows that he will be called to account for every word uttered by his tongue: "Why did he say this? For what reason did he say this? Did he speak the truth or did he lie? What his purpose righteous in this or was it false?" It will not be possible for him to mediate (for himself), or that he plea or judge for himself.

However, for an advocate who intercedes with the great for a post to be given to some person, if he takes trouble, and accepts a fee for this, it is lawful, with the stipulations that the work he does involves some difficulty and he does not take (money) as a requital for his dignity or rank as compensation, and that what he says in this effort be lawful. If he speaks in aid of the unjust, or says something forbidden in arranging for a stipend, he is in rebellion (against God), and his fee is unlawful.

All of these rules regarding fees must be learned by the payer and the payee both, for in this there is rebellion (against God), the details of which are lengthy. However, this much generally suffices to settle problems and one should know that he must ask (about other points).

THE FOURTH CONDITION is that he was not obliged to do the work and (the work) could not be delegated. For, if a warrior of the faith is hired during a war in defense of the faith, it is not lawful since it becomes his obligation (to fight) when he is present in the ranks. For this reason⁷⁴⁹ a fee for the judge and witnesses is not lawful. The payment (that someone makes) to someone who fasts on behalf of him or performs the obligatory formal prayers on his behalf is not lawful. But payment (to someone) for performing the Greater Pilgrimage is lawful for a person who is unable to do so. (Fees paid to) gravediggers, washers of the dead, and pallbearers are lawful, even though it is a religious obligation that can be performed by oneself or another on his behalf.⁷⁵⁰

As for the imam leading the recommended night formal prayers during the month of Ramadan and the muezzin, there is a difference of opinion. The correct view is that (payment to them) is not forbidden. It is for his effort—for they take time and he must be present in the mosque—not for the formal prayer or the summoning to formal prayer. Nevertheless, it is not devoid of disapproval and doubt.

⁷⁴⁹ That is, for the reason that it cannot be delegated to another.

⁷⁵⁰ "a religious obligation that can be performed by oneself or another on his behalf": *fard-i kifāyat*.

THE FIFTH CONDITION is that work be known. A beast of burden that is to be hired must be seen. The one who lets it must know how large the load will be, whether it will be ridden, and for how many days it will be driven, unless there is a well-known customary arrangement for those things that would suffice (to satisfy this condition). If someone rents a plot of land, he should say what he intends to plant there, for the harm done (to the soil) by millet is greater than that done by wheat, unless it is customarily known. In the same way, all leases should be based upon knowledge so that disputes not arise. Everything done in ignorance from which disputes arise is void.

THE FIFTH CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT IS A LIMITED PARTNERSHIP.⁷⁵¹ It has three elements:

THE FIRST ELEMENT is capital. It should be cash—gold or silver—but caraway seed, cloth, and cottonseed (for oil) are not suitable. The weight should be made known and it must be handed over to the working partner.⁷⁵² If the owner (of the capital) should stipulate that he will put it in (the other's) hand (later), it is not correct.

THE SECOND ELEMENT is profit. That which will revert to the working partner must be stated plainly, as "half," or "a third." If one says: "Ten dirhams for thee—or for me—we shall divide the rest," it is invalid.

THE THIRD ELEMENT is the work. It is required that the work be trade, and that that be buying and selling, not a craft. It is not lawful to give a baker wheat so that he bake bread and then split the profit. If cottonseed is given to an oil-presser, the same is true. If in the trading, there is a condition that one sell nothing but to such-and-such a person, or buy nothing but from such-and-such a person, it is invalid. Whatever condition restricts trade is invalid.

The contract (of limited partnership) is that which states: "I give this wealth to thee so that thou may trade with it and divide the profit in two equal parts." The other says: "I accept." When the contractual agreement is concluded, the working partner is the agent of the other in buying and selling. It is lawful for him to cancel the contract at any time. When the investor cancels (the agreement), if the property is in cash and there is a profit, they divide (the profit).

If the capital is in kind and there is no profit, it is given to the investor and it is not incumbent upon the working partner to sell it. If the

⁷⁵¹ Limited partnership (*qirād*): a partnership wherein one partner supplies the capital and the other the labor. The second takes half of the profits for his labor. The French *commandite*. In Islamic Law (*fiqh*), this is also called *muḍārabah* and *muqāraḍah*.

⁷⁵² "working partner" (*ʿāmil*): or "agent."

working partner says: "I shall sell it," it is lawful for the investor to forbid that unless a customer has been found who will buy it at a profit. In that case, he cannot stop the working partner from selling it. When the wealth is in kind and there is a profit, the working partner must sell (that much of) it (to raise the amount of) cash that had been the working capital, not for more. When the value of the working capital has been raised in cash, the rest (of the goods) are divided (between the partners) and it is not incumbent upon the (the working partner) to sell them.

After a year (of the agreement) has passed, it is necessary to assess the value of the wealth for (paying) the obligatory poor-rate. The working partner must pay his own portion of the obligatory poor-rate.

It is not fitting that (the working partner) make a journey (for trading) without the permission of the investor. If he does, it is in the surety of property. But, if he makes a journey at the behest of the investor, the expenses of his travels are borne by the partnership, just as measuring, weighing, portorage and rent of the shop are borne by the capital. Upon return, whatever he bought out of the capital, such as a dining cloths or ewers, becomes part of that capital.

THE SIXTH CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT IS A PARTNERSHIP. When property is held jointly, a partnership exists when permission is given to each other to control it. Then the profits are divided into two halves—if the capital of the two is equal. If it is unequal, then the profit will be (divided) proportionately, with the stipulation that it will not be permitted to alter (this division), except when the work is done by one. Then, it will be permissible for him to stipulate more for reason of the work. In this, the limited partnership and partnership are alike. However, there are three other kinds of customary partnership that are invalid:

One is the partnership of porters and craftsmen who stipulate that whatever they earn will be held jointly. This is invalid, for the earnings of each individual is purely his property.

Another is called the reciprocal partnership in which everything one has is put forward and it is said: "Whatever profit or loss there is belongs to all." This too is invalid.

Another is that one has the capital, another the rank. The property is sold on the word of the possessor of rank and the profits shared between them. This, too, is invalid.

Learning this much about the subject of transactions is necessary, for its need is general. What has not been covered here is unusual. If this much is known, whoever has a problem may ask. If one does not know this much, he may fall into the forbidden and not be forgiven.

PART THREE: CONCERNING THE OBSERVANCE OF EQUITY AND JUSTICE IN TRANSACTIONS

Know that that which we have said above concerns the correctness of transactions according to the letter of Religious Law. There are many transactions for which we issue judicial opinions that are (legally) correct, but for which that person (the successful litigant) is under the curse of God. These are transactions in the sorrow and harm of Muslims. There are two kinds of these: one is public; the other is private.

AS FOR THE PUBLIC AFFLICTIONS, they are two:

THE FIRST is hoarding. The hoarder is accursed (by God). A hoarder is one who buys foodstuffs⁷⁵³ and stores them so that they will become expensive. Then, he sells them. The Prophet (S) said: "It is not sufficient atonement for whoever holds food for forty days so that it will become expensive to then give all of it to charity."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever retains foodstuffs for forty days with the intention of causing the price to rise, God Most High is displeased with him, and he is displeased with God Most High." And the Messenger (S) said: "For whoever buys foodstuffs and then takes them and sells them a month later at the current price, it is as though he gives them to charity." In another Tradition, it is related: "It is as though he had set a slave free."

'Ali (R) used to say: "The soul of him who stores foodstuffs for forty days is black." When he was informed that food was being hoarded, he ordered that the food be set afire.

Some of the forefathers sent some food from Basrah to Wasit to sell by means of an agent. When (the agent) arrived (at Wasit), he found that prices were very low. He waited a week with the intention of selling it after that. He wrote (to the owners in Basrah), informing them of what he had done. They replied: "We would have been content with a little profit and soundness of faith. Thou shouldst not have exchanged our faith for a large profit. What thou hast done is a great crime. Thou must donate all of it to charity as atonement for what thou hast done. Perhaps even with this action we shall not have delivered ourselves completely from this misfortune."

Know that the reason for this prohibition is the harm it does to the public, for food is the mainstay of mankind. When it is sold, it is allowed for all people to buy, but when one person buys it and then locks it up, no one can get hold of it. It is as though lawful water belonging to

⁷⁵³ Foodstuffs (*qūt*): This passage refers to the basic food of the people. In this case, grain, principally wheat, is meant. In areas where the basic cereal is rice, it would be rice.

no one is blocked in order to make the people thirst and then purchase it at great cost.

The sin lies in buying foodstuffs with such an intention. However, the villager who has grain and foodstuffs, his own property belonging to himself, may sell it at any time he wishes. He is not obliged to sell early, but it is better if he does not delay (too much). If in his heart he has a desire to sell dear, such a desire is reprehensible.

Know that with regard to the hoarding of medicines and things other than foodstuffs and not part of the basic needs of the public, it is not prohibited, but as to regard to foodstuffs, it is prohibited. However, there is a difference of opinion (among legal scholars) about things close to (basic) foodstuffs, such as meat, ghee, and the like. The correct view is that (hoarding such things) is not devoid of repugnance, but they are not in the class of (basic) foodstuffs. It is also forbidden to withhold foodstuffs when food is scarce. However, when anyone can buy as much as he desires, then it is not forbidden, as there is no necessity. Some are of the opinion that this too is forbidden at such a time. The correct view is that it is repugnant; for, in short, it is the expectation of rising prices, and waiting for the misery of the people, which is reprehensible. The forefathers held two kinds of trade to be repugnant: one the selling of food, the other the selling of shrouds—for the latter is in the expectancy of the death of persons and the sorrow of people, which is reprehensible. They also considered two professions reprehensible: butchering, for it makes the heart hard, and goldsmithery, which adorns the world.

THE SECOND KIND of public affliction is giving bad money in transactions, for if the person who accepts it does not know that (the giver) has oppressed him. If he knows it, it may be that he will deceive another, and then that person still another, and it will circulate for a long time from hand to hand. All of its injustice will redound to him. For this reason one of the great ones has said: "Giving one bad dirham is worse than stealing a hundred dirhams." He said that because the sin of stealing is over at once, but this is something that may continue after the death (of the giver of false coin). His misfortune is that he dies, but his sin does not die. It may continue for a hundred years or two hundred, and he shall suffer the torment of that in the grave, even though its origin has passed out of his hands.

Now, five things must be known with respect to adulterated gold and silver:

FIRST: When a false coin comes to hand, one must throw it into a well. It is not right to give it to another and say that it is bad money, for it may be that that person deceive another with it.

SECOND: It is obligatory for a merchant to master the knowledge of cash so that he may recognize that which is bad, not so that he not accept it; rather, so that he not pass it on to another by mistake and cause

a (fellow) Muslim loss. Whoever does not acquire this knowledge, should he circulate a bad coin by mistake, is in rebellion (against God), since the quest for knowledge regarding every transaction by which a person may be afflicted is obligatory.

THIRD: If one accepts it with the intention declared by the Messenger (S): "*God forgive the affair (of him) who makes the business of buying and selling easy,*" it is good, but (only) with the intention to throw it into a well. However, if the idea is to spend it, it is not right, even if one says that it is counterfeit.

FOURTH (AND FIFTH): False coin is that in which there is no gold or silver. It is not necessary to throw (those coins) in which there is gold and silver, but in a deficient (amount), into a well. But if it is spent, two things are necessary. One is that one should say (that the coin is clipped) and not conceal it. The other is that it be given to a person in whose integrity one has the confidence that he, too, will not deceive another. So, if one knows that he considers spending it lawful and does not say anything, it is as though he knowingly sells grapes to someone to make wine, or he sells a weapon to someone he knows intends to be highwayman. These are forbidden. Because of the difficulty of security in transaction, the forefathers have said: "A trustworthy merchant is superior to a devotee."

THE SECOND KIND IS PRIVATE INJUSTICE that does not touch anyone save a party to the transaction. Any transaction which causes injury is oppression and forbidden.

In summary, it is not lawful for anyone to do anything to believer that which he does not consider lawful when done to himself. The faith of whoever approves of something for the believers that he does not approve of for himself is incomplete. The details of this are four things:

FIRST: That one not praise merchandise more extravagantly than it deserves, for this is also a lie, a misrepresentation, and an injustice. Also, one should not praise it justly, for the buyer knows it without his saying. This is useless. *He utters no word but there is with him an observer ready.* (Q. 50:18) Of everything that one says, they will ask: "Why didst thou say that?" If thou hast spoken nonsense, there will be no excuse.

As for swearing oaths, if it is a lie, it is a great sin. If it is true and the name of God Most High has been invoked for a mean task, it is an affront to the dignity (of God). In the Traditions, it is related: "Woe unto the merchants for (their) '*No, by God*'s and (their) '*Yes, by God*'s, and woe unto the craftsmen for their '*tomorrow*'s and '*the day after tomorrow*'s." And it is related in The Traditions: "God Most High will

not look at the person on the Day of Resurrection who distributes his own goods with oaths." There is a story about Yunus bin 'Ubayd⁷⁵⁴ (R), that he used to sell silken stuff. One day he opened his basket to a customer. His apprentice said: "O God! Grant me heavenly robes." (Yunus) threw the basket down and refused to sell the silk. He feared that this was (excessive) praise of his goods.

THE SECOND DUTY in selling is that one should not conceal any defect in the goods from the customer. Everything should be told to him truthfully and completely. If one conceals something, he has committed fraud and has abandoned righteousness. He is an oppressor and a rebel (against God). Whenever he displays the best side of the cloth or shows it in a dimly lighted place so that it will appear better (than it is), or displays the better of a pair of shoes or stockings, he is a tyrant and a scoundrel. One day, the Messenger (S) was passing by a man selling wheat. He thrust his hand into the wheat. Inside it was damp. He asked: "What is this?" The man replied: "Water got into it." (The Prophet) said: "Why hast thou not gotten the water out of it? *Whoever deceives us is not one of us.*"

A man sold a camel that had a game leg for three hundred dirhams, unaware that Wathilah bin Asqa',⁷⁵⁵ one of the Companions, was standing there, inattentive. When he realized (what had happened), he went after the buyer and told him that the camel had a game leg. The buyer went to the seller and took one hundred dirhams back from him. The seller said (to Wathilah): "Why didst thou spoil my sale?" He replied: "Because I heard the Prophet say: "It is not lawful for someone to sell something and conceal a defect. It is also not lawful for another who knows not to speak." And he said: "The Messenger (S) has accepted our obedience to counsel the Muslims and to observe kindness. Concealment does not come from wise counsel."

Know that conducting business transactions in such a way is difficult. It is one of the great earnest strivings, but it is facilitated by two things:

ONE is that one should not buy defective goods. (About) what one buys (of defective goods), (the purchaser) should say to himself that if he has been defrauded, he knows that the loss is his and it does not fall upon someone else. If he himself curses the person who defrauded him, (at least) he does not fall under the curse of another. The fact of it is that he knows that one's portion in life is not increased by fraud; rather, the

⁷⁵⁴ Yunus bin 'Ubayd: a contemporary of Sufyan Thawri (see Note 397) mentioned by Ibn Khallikan.

⁷⁵⁵ Wathilah bin Asqa': A Companion of the Prophet and one of the People of the Bench (*ahl-i şuffah*) who lived in his mosque. See Note 1706.

blessing of wealth departs and there is no enjoyment.⁷⁵⁶ Whatever bits and pieces he obtains through purse-cutting will cause him loss suddenly when misfortune falls upon him, but the injustice will remain. It will be like the man who was in the habit of mixing water with the milk. His flocks of sheep were taken by a boy to the mountain (to graze). Suddenly a flood struck and carried the sheep away. The boy said: "It was the various amounts of water that we had mixed in the milk collected in a flood that bore the sheep away."

The Messenger (S) says: "When treachery enters transactions, blessedness departs." The meaning of "blessedness" is that a person possess a little wealth which gives him good fortune. Many people are made comfortable by that (wealth) and much goodness is brought about by it. And there is the person who possesses much wealth and whose great wealth is the cause of his ruin in this world and the next; it has no blessedness. Therefore, one must seek blessedness, not increase. And blessedness lies in trustworthiness. For, all (people) desire to do business with whoever is known for his honesty. His profit is much. Should he become known for fraud, all would guard against him.

THE OTHER is that one know that the length of one's life will not be more than a hundred years, but the Hereafter is forever. How could he, in these few days, consider it right to imperil his own eternal life for the sake of amassing silver? In his soul, he must reconsider these things so that imposture and treachery not seem sweet to him. The Messenger (S) says: "People are in the protection of *there is no god but God* from the wrath of God Most High until they give precedence to the world over religion. Then, whenever they pronounce those words, God Most High says: "In these words thou art speaking a lie and are not truthful."

As selling not to deceive is a religious obligation, so this is a religious obligation in all occupations. Adulterating is forbidden, unless it is not concealed. Ahmad Hanbal (R) was asked about mending (woven goods). He said: "It is proper if is done for wearing, not for selling. Whoever mends to misrepresent is in rebellion (against God) and his earnings are unlawful."

THE THIRD DUTY is that there be no fraud in the quantity and weight, and that the measure be correct. God Most High says: *Woe unto the defrauders!* (Q. 83:1) Woe to those who, when they receive, weigh high and, when they sell, weigh low. It was the custom of the forefathers that when they received, they would accept half a grain less and when they gave, they would give half a grain more. They would say: "The half-grain is a veil between us and hell," for they feared they could not measure accurately. And they would say: "The person is a fool who

⁷⁵⁶ "enjoyment" (*barkhwurdārī*): or "felicity, reputation, good fortune."

would sell Paradise, with a breadth many times greater than the seven heavens and earth, for half a grain! The person is a fool who would exchange excellence for woe for half a grain!" Whenever the Messenger (S) bought anything, he would say: "Weigh the price and weigh more than is due."⁷⁵⁷

Fudayl 'Iyad saw his son weighing dinars to give to some person. He was cleaning the dirt off the coins (before weighing them). Fudayl said: "O son, that is better for thee than two Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages."

Our forefathers used to say: "The owner of two sets of scales, one for giving, the other for receiving, is worse than all (other) sinners. Each dealer in cloth who, when buying or measuring, is lax and, when selling, is tight⁷⁵⁸ is one of them. Any butcher who weighs the bone with the meat where it is not the custom is one of them. Whoever sells grain mixed with dirt—more than is usual—is one of them. All of this is forbidden. Instead, integrity is required in all works and dealings with people, for whoever says something which, if he were to hear the like spoken about himself, would hear it with displeasure, has made a distinction between giving and receiving. He escapes this (sin) by not holding back anything for himself from his brother in any dealing; but this characteristic is difficult. It is with regard to this that God Most High said: *And there is not one of you but shall come to it.* (Q. 19:71) There is no one who will not be forced to pass by hell, but the nearer a person is to the way of piety, the more quickly he will obtain delivery (from it).

THE FOURTH DUTY is that one not make any misrepresentation in the price of the goods or conceal anything, for the Messenger (S) has prohibited a person's going before a caravan and, concealing the market rate of the city, buying the goods (of the caravan) cheaply (before it has entered the city). The owner of the goods has the right to cancel the sale to anyone who does this. And the Messenger (S) forbade that a person say to a stranger who has brought goods to a city where the price is low (for those goods): "Leave (the goods) with me so that I may sell them at a higher price later."

And he prohibited the purchase of goods at a high price so that another person think that (the first) is telling the truth and (the second) buys them at a higher price. If someone arranges with the owner of the

⁷⁵⁷ In olden times, coins made of precious metals were weighed to verify weight because such coins lost weight through handling and the reprehensible practice of "clipping" (shaving off bits of the precious metal).

⁷⁵⁸ That is, manipulates measurements of cloth and specie to his advantage; under-measuring when purchasing from a supplier and doing the opposite when selling; giving false measurements during transactions; selling, for example, 10 yards of fabric while claiming that is 11 yards.

goods to deceive someone, when (the buyer) realizes (the deception), it is lawful for him to cancel the transaction. And it is customary that when the goods are auctioned off in the market place, someone who has no intention of buying the goods raises the price. This is unlawful. Nor is it permitted to buy goods from a simple-minded person who does not know their value and then sells them cheaply, or that a simple-minded person buy at too high a price. However much we may issue decisions that the sale is in appearance correct, but when the truth of the matter is concealed from him, it is criminal.

One of the Followers⁷⁵⁹ was in Basrah. One of his bondmen wrote to him from Shush:⁷⁶⁰ "The sugar crop has been affected by blight this year. Before anyone knows, buy a large amount of sugar." He bought a large amount of sugar and sold it at the right time. He made a profit of 30,000 dirhams. Then, he said to himself: "Thou hast defrauded the Muslims and concealed the blighting of the sugar crop. When has this become lawful?" He took up the 30,000 dirhams and went to the seller and said: "This is thine." The seller asked: "Why?" He told him the story. The seller said: "I declare it lawful⁷⁶¹ for thee." That night after returning to his house, he thought about the matter very carefully and said: "It may be that the man said that out of diffidence, yet I have (still) defrauded him." The next day he returned (to the seller) and said that to him and pleaded with him until he took back the 30,000 dirhams.

Know that whoever states his purchase price must speak the truth and not misrepresent it in any way. If a defect is found in the goods, he should tell the owner. If he has paid too much, but has overlooked this because of his friendship for the seller who has been his friend or relative, he should tell him. If he has given goods worth nine dinars in the exchange for ten dinars, it is not proper that he say he bought them for ten dinars. If he had bought them cheaply during that time, but later the price changed and was now nine dinars, he should state that. The details of this are lengthy and not suitable for inclusion in this book, for merchants practice many frauds without realizing that they are frauds. The fact is that if someone practiced the same trickery upon him, he would not regard it as lawful, so it is not right that he do it to another. He must make this his standard, for when someone buys something trusting the word of the seller as to what he paid for it, he buys it thinking that the thorough investigation of the matter is completed and that he is (now) paying what the item is worth. When there is an underlying deception, the buyer would not agree, and that is picking pockets.

⁷⁵⁹ The Followers (*tābiʿīn*): the generation that followed the Companions.

⁷⁶⁰ Shush (*Shūsh*): the text has *Sūs*, an alternate version. The city was known to the ancient Greek world as Susa. It is located in the province of Khuzestan in southwestern Iran. To the present day, Khuzestan is the center for the growing of sugar cane in Iran.

⁷⁶¹ See Note 741 above.

PART FOUR: CONCERNING BENEFICENCE AND GOOD DEEDS IN TRANSACTIONS

Know that God Most High has commanded beneficence⁷⁶² just as He has commanded justice, for *Lo! God enjoins justice and beneficence.* (Q. 16:90) The previous section was devoted to a discussion of justice so that one may flee (doing) oppression. This section is about beneficence. God Most High says: *Verily the mercy of God is close to the beneficent.* (Q. 7:56) Whoever has confined himself to justice has held on to his capital in religion. However, the profit lies in beneficence. The intelligent one is that person who does not neglect the profit of the Hereafter in any transaction.

Beneficence is a good deed in which there is a benefit for the (other) transactor that is not obligatory upon thee. The degree of beneficence is attained in six ways:

THE FIRST WAY is that one should not consider it lawful to take excessive profit, even if the buyer is agreeable because of a need he has. Sari Saqati⁷⁶³ used to have a shop and did not think it lawful to make a profit of more than 5%. One time he bought almonds for 60 dinars. Afterwards the price of almonds rose. An auctioneer came to buy the almonds. Sari said: "Sell them for 63 dinars." The other said: "Today the price is ninety dinars." Sari replied: "I have decided that I shall not sell them for a profit of more than 5%. It is not lawful (for me) to violate (my) resolution." (The auctioneer) said: "And I too do not consider it lawful to sell thy goods for less." So neither (the auctioneer) sold (the almonds), nor did Sari agree to excessive (profit). That is beneficence!

Muhammad (bin) al-Munkadir⁷⁶⁴ was an important personage and had a shop in which there were garments, the price of some, five dinars and others, ten dinars. In his absence, his apprentice sold a five-dinar garment to a bedouin for ten dinars. When (Muhammad al-Munkadir) returned he learned this and spent the whole day searching for that bedouin. When he finally located him, he said: "That garment was not worth five dinars." The bedouin replied: "It may be that I am content." (Muhammad) said; "So be it, but I do not like anything for any Muslim that I do not like for myself. Come, and cancel the transaction, or

⁷⁶² "beneficence": *ihsān*.

⁷⁶³ Sari Saqati: Al-Sari Abū al-Ḥasan al-Mughallis (or Mughallas) al-Saqatī (following HK's explicit vowelizing; others vowel it *Saqatī*). From Baghdad, he was a prominent ascetic and theologian. He died about AH254/868CE, at the age of 98, according to report. (See the Fifth Station in the Sixth Chapter of the Fourth Pillar).

⁷⁶⁴ Muhammad (bin) al-Munkadir: a man of learning quoted by the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century ascetic Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah (see Note 990). Imam Abu Hanifah (see Note 400) also attended his lectures.

take five dinars from me, or come and I shall give thee a better garment." The bedouin accepted the five dinars, then he asked someone: "Who is that man?" He was told that he was Muhammad bin al-Munkadir. He said: "Glory be to God! He is that very man at the mention of whose name, whenever there is a drought in the desert and we pray for rain, rain falls!"

The forefathers were of habit of making a small profit in many transactions. They held this to be more blessed than waiting for a large profit. 'Ali (R) used to walk about the market of Kufah, saying: "O people! Do not reject a small profit for ye will lose much." And 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf⁷⁶⁵ was asked: "What is the cause of thy great wealth?" He replied: "I do not reject a small profit, and whoever wanted an animal from me, I did not refuse and sold it to him. In one day, I sold a thousand camels for what I had paid for them and did not make a profit exceeding two thousand knee hobbles.⁷⁶⁶ Each one was worth a dinar and I no longer had to pay a dinar for the fodder (of each camel). So I made a profit of 2,000 dirhams!"

THE SECOND WAY is that one buys the goods of the poor—such as the yarn of old women and leftover fruit from the hands of poor children—at a higher price, so as to gladden them. This indulgence is better and more meritorious than voluntary charity. The supplication of the Messenger (S): "*May God bless the affair (of him) who facilitates buying and selling,*" touches him.

As for the rich, buying goods from them by gulling has neither recompense nor gratitude. It is a waste of goods. Instead, (with them) bargaining and buying at a low price is to be preferred.

Hasan and Husayn (R) used to try to buy everything at a lower price and would argue until it was said (to them): "Ye give away thousands of dirhams a day; why do ye bargain for this amount?" They would reply: "What we give, we give for the sake of God Most High, and lot in that is a little. However, accepting a loss is a loss of intelligence and wealth."

⁷⁶⁵ 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf: 'Abd al-Rahmān bin 'Awf al-Zuhri, an early convert to Islam and one of those who went to Ethiopia and later returned, fighting in many of the Muslim military expeditions. He was one of those appointed to choose the third caliph after the assassination of 'Umar bin al-Khattab. He died in Madinah in AH32/652-3CE.

⁷⁶⁶ "knee hobbles" (*zānū band*): the strap or rope by which one of the camel's legs is bound to the thigh thus preventing it from straying. In Arabic, it is called *'iqāl*, and Arab men customarily wind it around their heads when it is not in use on the camel. Today, it is worn by most Arabs of the Peninsula as a personal ornament, even if they do not have any camels. By selling the camels, 'Abd al-Rahman received back the hobbles and no longer had to pay for their fodder. He considered that a profit.

THE THIRD WAY lies in three kinds of beneficence in receiving the price (of the goods): the first is some reduction, another is accepting broken coins and worse cash, and the third is granting time (for payment). The Messenger (S) says: "May God have mercy on the person who makes receiving and giving easier." And he says: "God Most High will make easy the affairs of him who is lenient."

There is no beneficence greater than giving a respite to a poor person. However, if he does not have anything, giving him time is a duty and is a part of justice. However, if he has something, but cannot sell it lest he sell at a loss, or he is in need of it, granting him time is a good deed and is one of the great (forms of) charity.

And the Messenger (S) said: "At the Resurrection a man will be brought forward who had oppressed himself in religion. No good deed was recorded in his ledger. He is asked: 'Hast thou never done any good deed?' He replies: 'No, I have not, except that I used to tell my apprentices to give time to whoever owes me (money) and is in straitened circumstances and to be lenient (with him).' God Most High says: 'So on this day that thou art in straitened circumstances and helpless, We prefer to be lenient with thee.' And He forgives him."

In the Traditions, it is related that: "Whoever gives a loan for a period of time, with each day that passes, it is a voluntary charity. When the (stated) period has elapsed, for every day that passes after that, it is as if he had given that sum as voluntary charity. Among the forefathers, there were persons who did not want to have their loans repaid, for they would be credited with voluntary charity to the amount of the sum each day.

The Messenger (S) said: "I saw it written on the gate of Paradise that a dirham of voluntary charity is worth ten dirhams, but the dirham of a loan is worth eighteen dirhams." That is because no one borrows except out of need, but it is possible that voluntary charity fall may not into the hand of a needy person.

THE FOURTH WAY is by repaying loans. The beneficence in this is that a request not be necessary and that one hurry and pay (the loan) out of better coin, and deliver it with one's own hand to the house of the lender, so that that person not be required to send someone to one. It is related in the Traditions: "The best of you is he who better pays his debts." And it is related in the Traditions: "Until the loan is repaid, God Most High appoints several angels to watch over and supplicate for whoever takes a loan and in his heart is determined to repay it with better."

However, if one is able to repay and delays an hour without the agreement of the lender, he is unjust and in rebellion (against God). Whether he is performing formal prayer, whether he is fasting, whether

he is sleep—in all of these he remains in the curse of God Most High. It is a sin that continues while he is asleep.

The condition of the ability (to repay) is not (just) that one have cash. Rather, when one has something to sell and does not, one is in rebellion (against God). If one repays with bad money or a substitute which the lender receives with dislike, then one is in rebellion. He will not escape (the onus of) this misdeed until he obtains the satisfaction of (the lender). This is counted among the great sins that easily ensnare people.

THE FIFTH WAY is that one cancels any transaction about which the other party has second thoughts. The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High considers the sins not done of whoever considers a sale not completed and not done." This is not an obligation, but its reward is great and it is a beneficence.

THE SIXTH WAY is to sell to the poor on credit, even if it is a small amount, with the intention of not calling for payment so long as they have no money. If they die in straitened circumstances, one should forgive the debt. Among the forefathers, there were those who kept two ledgers, one with false names for those who had no wealth and were poor. They did not record their names so that if they (the lenders) should die, no one would request repayment from (the poor debtors). But these (lenders) were not counted as among the best. Rather, the best were considered to be those who kept no ledger of the names of the poor (in any form). If they repaid (the loan), they accepted it; if not, they abandoned any desire for it.

The pious behaved thus in transactions. The quality of a religious man is apparent in his transactions. Whoever shuns a doubtful silver dirham for religious reasons is counted among the men of faith.

PART FIVE: CONCERNING CONSIDERATION FOR RELIGION AMIDST THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE WORLD

Know that that person whom the business of the world distracts from the business of religion is wretched. What is the state of a person who exchanges a golden jug for an earthen jug? The earthen jug represents the world, while the golden jug represents the Hereafter, which is both beautiful and enduring and shall never come to an end. The business of the world is not suitable for the provisions of the Hereafter. Rather, one must strive very hard to turn away from the way to hell. The capital of a human being is his religion and his Hereafter. Not having mercy on himself, all of his energies are engaged by commerce and husbandry, but he has this consideration for religion when he observes seven precautions:

THE FIRST PRECAUTION is that one renews his intentions in his heart every day. He goes to the market to obtain his food and that of his family so that he will not need to importune others and to be free from covetousness, to acquire enough strength and leisure to worship God Most High and to travel the road to the Hereafter. And he forms the intention to observe on this day compassion, counsel, and trust with people. And he forms the intention to enjoin what is good and prohibit what is reprehensible. He will reprove whoever acts treacherously and not absolve him.

If one forms these intentions, it is one of the works of Hereafter and a profit to religion. If one obtains anything from the world, it will be increased.

THE SECOND PRECAUTION is that one (should) know that he cannot live a day without the labor of at least a thousand other persons, such as the baker, the farmer, the weaver, the blacksmith, the cotton carder, and (the workers of) other trades—all working for him and for whom he has need. It is not right that others work for him, all benefiting him, and that no one benefit from him. For the whole world in this life is on a journey and the travelers must take each other by the hand so that they may aid one another. He must also form the intention: "I shall go to the market to work so that Muslims will find comfort from it, just as other Muslims are doing my work." For all employments are among the transferable obligations.⁷⁶⁷

One also forms the intention that he has risen to perform one of these obligations. The sign of the correctness of this intention is that he works at a job that is needed by the people. If the job is not like that, it should not be harmful to the affairs of the people, such as goldsmithery, portraiture, plastering, sculpting; for all of these are for the decoration of the world and there is no necessity (for that). It is better not to do this, even though it may be lawful. As for embroidering and gold fabrics for men (to wear), these are in themselves unlawful.⁷⁶⁸

Among the employments that were disliked by the forefathers are selling foodstuffs, selling shrouds, butchering, money changing—it is difficult to observe the finer points of (avoiding) usury in it—cupping—for there is the cutting of a human being in which there may be benefit but there may be the opposite—night soil sweeping, and tanning—for it is difficult to cleanse clothing of their impurities and (the work) points to low aspirations. The same with respect to the herdsmen of beasts of

⁷⁶⁷ "transferable obligations": *furūd-i kifāyat*.

⁷⁶⁸ Men are prohibited from wearing silk and gold.

burden, and brokerage—for one cannot avoid being talkative and garrulous.

In the Traditions, it is related that the best business is that of that haberdasher and the best craft is that of the cobbler who makes water bottles, vessels for purification, and the like (out of leather). In the Traditions, it is related that: "If there is any merchant in heaven, it will be a haberdasher; if there is one in hell, it will be the moneychanger." Four trades were considered weak: weaving, cotton selling, spindle-making, and teaching. The reason for this is that these people deal with women and children, and whoever mingles with weak intellects becomes weak of intellect himself.

THE THIRD PRECAUTION is that market of the world not keep one from the market of the Hereafter. The market of the Hereafter is the mosque. God Most High says: *Let not your wealth nor your children distract you from the remembrance of God.* (Q. 63:9) He says: "Be so that the business of trade does not prevent you from the remembrance of God Most High, for then ye will be the losers."⁷⁶⁹

'Umar (R) said to the merchants: "At the beginning of the day, ye forsake the Hereafter, and after that the world." The custom of the forefathers was that they considered morning and the evening for the Hereafter. Either they were in the mosques in remembrance of God Most High, or attending an informative assembly. Pottage and head-and-trotters stew, all of it, used to be sold by children and (non-Muslim) people of the Book because at those time the men were all in the mosques.

In the Traditions, it is related: "When the angels bear to heaven the record of the servant (of God) who has done a good deed at the beginning and end of the day, what he has done in between is forgiven." And in the Traditions it is related: "The angels of the night and the angels of the day gather together and God Most High asks: 'How did it go, My servants?' They reply: 'When we passed them they were all at formal prayer, when we arrived they were engaged in formal prayer.' God Most High says: 'I have accepted you as witnesses that I have forgiven them.'"

When one hears the summons to obligatory formal prayer at the midday, one must not hesitate. One should put down whatever work one is doing and go to the mosque. In the commentary on this verse—(*Men whom neither merchandise nor sale beguiles from remembrance of God ...* (Q. 24:37)—it is said that they were a people whose blacksmith had raised his hammer. When the summons to obligatory formal prayer began, he did not strike. The water-bottle maker had thrust his needle

⁷⁶⁹ Ghazzali's paraphrase.

(into the leather), but at the call to obligatory formal prayer, he did not draw it out.

THE FOURTH PRECAUTION is that one should not neglect the remembrance and glorification of God Most High in the market. As much as possible, the tongue and heart should not be idle (of this). One should know that one will not find a profit in all the world comparable to (the profit) from this. The spiritual reward for remembrance among the heedless is greater. The Messenger (S) said: "The rememberer of God among the heedless is like a green tree among dry trees, like the living among the dead, and like the combatant among those who flee." And the Messenger (S) said: "For whoever arrives at the market and says: '*There is no god but God, Alone, He has no partner; His is the sovereignty and His is the praise; He gives life and causes death; He is Living and Immortal; All goodness is in His hand and He is Omnipotent in all things,*' twice a thousand thousand good deeds are recorded for him."

One day Junayd (R) said: "There are many people in the market who, if they listened to the Sufis and stood in their place, would be of them." And he said: "We know a person whose private worship in the market every day is three hundred bows of formal prayer and three thousand glorifications." And it was said that he desired to do this for himself.

In summary, whoever goes to the market to earn his livelihood so that he may obtain the leisure for his religion is thus; he does not neglect the real objective. However, whoever repairs (to the market) for (an) increase of worldly goods is incapable of this. Instead, if he goes to the mosque to perform formal prayer, his mind is distracted and occupied with store accounts.

THE FIFTH PRECAUTION is that one not be so covetous about the market so that he is the first to enter and the last to leave. Making long, dangerous journeys, traveling by ship, and the like are signs of excessive greed.

Mu'adh Jabal (R) says: "Iblis has a son whose name is Zalanbūr. He is his (father's) representative in the markets. (Iblis) says to him: 'Go the market and inspire their hearts with lies, oaths, deceit, treachery, and trickery. Accompany the first person to enter and the last to leave.'" It is related in the Traditions: "There are very bad places in the market and the worst of (the merchants) is the first to enter and the last to leave." Consequently, duty requires that one should not go to the market before attending edifying lectures, early morning private worship,

and the formal prayer of the mid-morning.⁷⁷⁰ When one has made enough profit for the expenditures of the day, one should return and enter the mosque to procure the sufficiency of the next life, for that life is longer and its needs are greater. (A person) is more in need of the provisions for that.

Hammad bin Salamah⁷⁷¹ was the teacher of Abu Hanifah. He used to sell women's head scarves. When he had made two grains profit, he would pack up his scales and go home.

Ibrahim bin Yassar said to Ibrahim Adham: "Today I go to work with mud." (Ibrahim Adham) said: "O Bin Yassar, thou art always seeking and always sought. Thou dost not pass over that which always seeks thee, and that which thou seekest will not pass over thee. Hast thou never seen the greedy deprived or the indolent provided for?" (Ibrahim bin Yassar) replied: "I have nothing in my possession other than a sixth part of a bean crop." (Ibrahim Adham) said: "Alas for Islam! When thou possessest that, thou still goest to work in mud?"

There was a group among the forefathers who were thus: they did not go to the market more than two days in the week. Another group went every day and stood for the noon obligatory formal prayer; a group attended the afternoon obligatory formal prayer and each person earned his daily bread and went to the mosque.

THE SIXTH PRECAUTION is that one avoid the doubtful. Moreover, if he flirts with the unlawful, he is a sinner and a rebel (against God). He should seek religious judgment about that which is doubtful in his heart, not from jurisprudents—(unless the jurisprudent) is one of the spiritual, and this is rare. He should not purchase anything from which his heart finds loathing. He should not deal with the unjust and their adherents. He should not sell any goods to an unjust person on credit, for then he may be saddened by that person's death and be pleased with his wealth. It is not fitting to be sorrowful at the death of an oppressor or to delight in his wealth. He will be a partner in their oppression if whatever he knowingly sells to them aids in their tyranny. For example, if one sells paper to comptrollers and oppressors, he will be punished for that.

⁷⁷⁰ Shops, except greengrocers and the like, are not usually opened until mid-morning (about 9:30 to 10:00 am). Ghazzali says the business men should perform the mid-morning formal prayer and then proceed to their places of business. The mid-morning formal prayer (*chāshṭ*) is not obligatory.

⁷⁷¹ Hammad bin Salamah: Ḥammād bin Dīnār, Abū Salamah, was a conservative jurist. A pupil of Ibrahim Nakha'i (see Note 859), he was a mufti of Basrah in the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century. He is credited with the invention of the terminology of legal categories (*asnāf*). He was succeeded by Imam Abu Hanifah (see Note 400). Hammad died AH166-7/783CE. (Fihrist)

In summary, one should not do business with just any person; rather, one should seek out experienced traders. It is said that there was once a time when whoever went to the market would say: "With whom shall I do business?" They would say: "With whomever thou wishest, for all take precautions." Then, there came a time when they answered: "Do not do business except with such-and-such persons." It is feared that a time will come when it will not be possible to do business with anyone.

That was said before our time. Behold! In our time it has become thus! They have erased the distinction and become audacious with that which they have heard from scholars deficient in knowledge and faith, that the wealth of world has become all the same and all of it is unlawful! This is a grievous error; it is not thus. The conditions of this will be related in *The Book of the Lawful and the Unlawful* after this,⁷⁷² if God Most High so wills.

THE SEVENTH PRECAUTION is that one should be scrupulous in speech, deed, and in lending or borrowing with every person with whom one deals. One should know that at the Resurrection, they will have him with all of (his customers) and they shall seek justice from him. One of the saints saw a merchant in his dreams. He asked him: "What has God Most High done with thee?" He answered: "He placed 50,000 documents before me. I said: 'Lord God, are all of these pages sins?' He replied: 'Thou hast transacted business with 50,000 persons. Each page is the record of one of them.'" (The merchant) said: "I saw that each one was my own record with (the customer), from the beginning to the end."

In summary, if one is responsible for a grain that (a customer) lost due to (the merchant's) misrepresentation, he will be seized for that loss and nothing will benefit him until he has got quit of that obligation.

This was the conduct of the forefathers in the way of Religious Law in business transactions. This practice has risen (and departed); the knowledge of transactions in this epoch has been forgotten. Whoever implements one of these practices earns great spiritual reward. It is related in the Traditions that the Messenger (S) said: "A time will come when, should a person observe one tenth of the precautions that ye do, it will be sufficient for him." He was asked: "Why?" He replied: "Because ye have a companion in good deeds. For that reason they are easy for you, but they will not have a companion and will be strangers among the heedless."

This was said so that if a person heard it he would not give up hope and would not say: "When could one do all of that?" For, as much as he is able to perform will be ample. Indeed, whoever has faith that the Hereafter is better than this world is able to do all of this, for nothing

⁷⁷² That is, in the following chapter.

save poverty is produced by taking these precautions. But any poverty for the sake of the eternal kingdom may be endured. People endure much destitution, suffering, and contempt in order to obtain wealth or achieve power, all of which, should death come, will be lost. It is not so great a task, in exchange for the empire of the Hereafter, if a person not do to others that which he does not like done to himself.

CHAPTER FOUR: RECOGNIZING THE LAWFUL, THE UNLAWFUL, AND THE DOUBTFUL⁷⁷³

The Messenger (S) said: *"Seeking the lawful is a religious obligation for every Muslim."* But the lawful cannot be sought until one knows what the "lawful" is. And he said: "The lawful is plain and the unlawful is plain, between the two of them lie the doubtful things, difficult and obscure. There is a fear that whoever gravitates towards them will fall into the forbidden.

Know that this study is lengthy and we have discussed this in *The Revival* in a detail not to be found in any other book. In this volume, we shall discuss that amount which common understanding can tolerate. We explain that much in four parts: First, Concerning The Spiritual Reward And Virtue Of Seeking The Lawful; Second, Concerning The Degrees Of Pious Scrupulousness in the Lawful and Unlawful; Third, Concerning Enquiring About the Lawful and Not Asking About It; and Fourth, Concerning Royal Stipends and the Rules of Mixing With Them.

PART ONE: CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL MERIT AND VIRTUE OF SEEKING THE LAWFUL

Know that God Most High says: *O ye Prophets! Eat of the good things, and do right.* (Q. 23:51) He says: "O Prophets eat of that which is clean and lawful and do that which befits obedience." The Messenger (S) said concerning this: "Seeking the lawful is incumbent upon all Muslims." And he said: "God Most High floods with light the soul of whoever eats of the lawful for forty days, without the admixture of anything unlawful, and opens the eyes of wisdom in his soul." One (version of the) Tradition has it that: "It cuts off the love of the world from his soul."

Sa'd⁷⁷⁴ was one of greatest of the Companions. He said: "O Prophet of God, teach (me) a supplication that will cause my supplications to be answered (by God)." (The Prophet) replied: "Eat of the lawful so that thine every supplication may be answered." And the Messenger (S) said: "There is many a person whose food, nourishment, and clothing are unlawful. Then, he raises his hands and offers supplications! When would such a supplication be answered?" And he

⁷⁷³ "lawful": *ḥalāl*; "unlawful": *ḥarām*; "doubtful": *shubḥat*.

⁷⁷⁴ Sa'd: Sa'd bin Abi Waqqās, Abū Ishāq. He became a convert to Islam at the age of 17 and was of the Prophets oldest Companions. He was one of those who had been promised Paradise. He was a formidable general. He led the Arab forces at the battle of Qadisiyah and conquered Iraq. He died in either AH50/670CE or AH55/674CE and is buried at Madinah.

said: "God Most High has an angel in the Sacred House.⁷⁷⁵ Every night he cries out: "God Most High will accept neither the performance of the obligatory nor the following of the Practice of the Prophet from him who eats of the unlawful." And (the Messenger) said: "Whoever buys a garment with 10 dinars, one dinar of which was (acquired) unlawfully—so long as that garment is on his body, none of his obligatory prayers will be accepted (by God)." And he said: "It is better that whatever flesh has grown from the unlawful be burned."

And he said: "(As for) him who cares not about the source of the property he obtains, God Most High cares not about where He throws him in hell." And he said: "Worship has ten parts; nine of those are the seeking of the lawful." And he said: "Whoever returns home at night tired from seeking the lawful, sleeps forgiven. He rises in the morning with God Most High pleased with him." And he said: "God Most High says: 'The persons who abstain from the forbidden are ashamed that I may call them to account.'" And he said: "One dirham taken in usury is harder than that which thirty acts of adultery do to (one's) being a Muslim." And he said: "Voluntary charity will not be accepted from whoever earns his livelihood from the forbidden. If he gives it, it will be his provision on the way to hell."

Abu Bakr (R) took a single gulp of milk from the hand of a male slave. Then, he realized that it was not from a good way.⁷⁷⁶ He thrust his finger down his throat so that he could vomit it up. It was feared that he might die from the sorrow and suffering of this. Then he said: "Lord God! I seek refuge with Thee from that which remains in my veins." 'Umar (R) did the same thing when he was mistakenly given milk donated as a voluntary charity and drank it.⁷⁷⁷

'Abdullah (bin) 'Umar (R) says: "Shouldst thou perform so many formal prayers that thy back develops a hump, shouldst thou fast so much that thou becomest as thin as a hair, it would be to no avail and not accepted (by God), except with the abstention from the unlawful."

Sufyan Thawri says: "Whoever gives voluntary charity from an unlawful source and does good works will be like the person who washes the filth of a garment away with feces." Yahya Mu'adh⁷⁷⁸ said: "Obedience is the treasury of God Most High. Its key is supplication, and

⁷⁷⁵ The Sacred House (*Bayt al-Muqaddas*): An epithet for Jerusalem, referring to the Temple.

⁷⁷⁶ That is, that the milk was not his to drink.

⁷⁷⁷ That is, 'Umar did not possess the qualifications to receive charity. He was not poor or destitute.

⁷⁷⁸ Yahya Mu'adh: Yahyā bin Mu'adh al-Rāzī, Abū Zakariyā', he was from Balkh in northern Afghanistan and, having spent some time in Baghdad, he died at Naysabur (Nishapur in modern Iran) in AH206/821-2CE. He was a well-known teacher and ascetic.

the notches (of the key) are the lawful." Sahl Tustari⁷⁷⁹ says: "No one achieves the truth of faith except with four things: performance of all religious obligations with their conditions and the Practice of the Prophet; eating of the lawful in accordance with the Religious Law and self-restraint; abandoning all improper things in appearance and essence; and being patient with this until death."

And it has been said: "The soul of whoever eats the doubtful for forty days becomes dark and tarnished." 'Abdullah Mubarak says: "I prefer returning one doubtful dirham to its owner over giving a hundred thousand in voluntary charity." Sahl Tustari says: "Whether one wishes it or not, if a person eats of the unlawful, his entire body falls into sin. The body of whoever eats of the lawful, whether he wishes it or not, is in obedience and the good fortune stays close to him."

There are many Traditions and non-Prophetic traditions about this that have come down to us. The reason was that the pious took great precautions. One of them was Wuhayb bin al-Ward,⁷⁸⁰ who never ate anything until he knew its source. One day, his mother gave him a cup of (sheep's) milk. He asked: "Where didst thou get this from? Where didst thou get the money to buy it? From whom didst thou buy it?" When she had answered these questions, he asked: "Where did the ewe graze?" The animal had grazed in a place where other Muslims had rights, so he did not drink it. His mother said: "Drink, for God Most High will have mercy upon thee." He replied: "I do not wish to, even if He should have mercy upon me, for then it would be mercy coming because of a sin and I do not want that."

Bishr Hafi was asked: "Where dost thou get thy sustenance?" Now, he was very scrupulous in taking precautions (against the unlawful). He used to say: "From the same place others do, but there is a difference between him who eats and weeps and him who eats and laughs." And he said: "It is not less than the hand being more restrained and fewer bites."

PART TWO: THE DEGREES OF THE LAWFUL AND THE UNLAWFUL

Know that there are degrees of lawfulness and unlawfulness; all are not alike. Some are lawful, others are perfectly lawful, and others are even more perfectly (lawful). The same is true of the unlawful; some things are more disagreeable and filthier. Just as in the case of illness in

⁷⁷⁹ Sahl Tustari: Abū Muḥammad Sahl bin 'Abdullāh bin Yūnus. The Tustari in his name would indicate that he was from Shushtar in southwestern Iran. He was a Sufi who interpreted the Quran allegorically and is credited with many miracles. He died in AH280/896CE.

⁷⁸⁰ Wuhayb bin al-Ward: one of four scrupulous men enumerated by Sari Saqati (see Note 763) who earned their livings from the lawful and ate of the lawful. (IKh)

which there is an injurious fever, the hotter it is, the greater the injury. Heat has degrees (of intensity), for honey is not like sugar. The unlawful is the same.

The Islamic ranking of scrupulousness concerning the unlawful and doubtful has five degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is the scrupulousness of abstention. That is the general scrupulousness of Muslims: to avoid everything held by evident legal opinion to be unlawful. This is the lowest of the degrees. If a person receives a property of another by an invalid contract with (the seller's) agreement, it is (nonetheless) unlawful. But if it is done with misappropriation, it is more unlawful. If it is taken from an orphan or a poor person, (the sin) is even greater. When the invalid contractual agreement is the cause of usury, its unlawfulness is much greater, even though all these things are called "unlawful." However much a thing is more unlawful, the danger from punishment for it is that much greater and the hope for forgiveness weaker. Just as when a sick man eats honey, the danger to him is much greater than if he were to eat red sugar. The more he eats of it, the danger is that much greater than if he had eaten less.

A person who has studied the whole of the religious jurisprudence knows the details about which is unlawful and which is lawful. Studying all of that is not an obligation upon every person. For that person whose livelihood is neither from the property of (war) booty, nor from the money of the poll tax imposed upon the non-Muslim Peoples of the Book, what is the necessity to study the books of war booty and the poll tax? However, it is the duty of every person to learn as much as he needs: if one's income is from selling, one must learn the rules of sales; if it is from day labor, one must learn the rules of hiring and letting. For every pursuit, there is some information: the craftsman must learn the skills of his craft.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the scrupulousness of the good, who are called righteous. They are those who abstain from whatever the expounders of the Law hold not to be forbidden, but not devoid of doubt.

There are three kinds of doubtfulness: some things about which it is necessary to be careful; other things which it is not necessary to avoid, but doing so is commendable. The obligatory is the first degree; the commendable is the second degree. The third is that one avoid that which is a useless anxiety, such as the person who does not eat the flesh of prey taken in hunting, saying: "Perhaps this (creature) was the someone's property that had run away from the owner." Or, he has a rented house which he leaves, saying: "Perhaps the owner may die and the property fall to an heir"—this, without any indication to substantiate it. It is a useless scruple.

THE THIRD DEGREE is the scrupulousness of the abstinent, who are called the pious. These are the ones who abstain from not only the unlawful and the doubtful, but also the absolutely lawful, but in which there is some fear that something doubtful or unlawful has affected it.

The Messenger (S) said: "A servant (of God) does not attain the degree of the pious until he abstains from a thing for which there is no concern, out of the fear he may fall into something for which there is concern."

'Umar (R) said: "We have abstained from nine-tenths of what is lawful out of the fear that we may fall into the unlawful." For this reason, the person who was owed 100 dirhams would not accept more than ninety-nine lest, if he were to take the full amount, it would be excessive.

'Ali bin Mu'abbid says: "I had rented a house. I had written a letter. I wanted to dry it with the dust of the wall."⁷⁸¹ Then I said: 'The wall is not my property, so I shall not do it.' Then I said: 'The amount is not very much.' I sprinkled a small amount of dust on the writing. In a dream, I saw a person who was saying to me: 'Those who say: 'How much is the dust of a wall?' will find out tomorrow at the Resurrection.'"

The persons who are at this level avoid every minor thing that is in the scope of leniency;⁷⁸² for it may be that when the way for this has been opened, it will lead to excess, and others may also fall from the level of the pious at the Resurrection. It was for this reason that the Messenger (S) said to Hasan bin 'Ali (R) while (Hasan) was still a child, when he placed a date from the property of the voluntary charity in his mouth: "Tsk, tsk."⁷⁸³ Spit it out!" That is: "Spit out (the date)."

Some musk taken as booty had been brought in. 'Umar(bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz⁷⁸⁴ put it to his nose and said: "Its benefit is its scent, and this is the right of all Muslims." One of the great ones of yore was sitting by the bed of a dying man. When (the man) received the command,⁷⁸⁵ the great one extinguished the lamp and said: "The oil (of the lamp) is now the inheritance of his heirs."

'Umar Khattab (R) had placed some musk taken as war-booty in his house so that his wife might sell it on behalf of the Muslims. One

⁷⁸¹ In the days of quill and reed pens, one sprinkled sand over a freshly written page to dry the ink.

⁷⁸² "in the scope of leniency" (*maḥall-i musāmāḥat*): permitted things and acts which, if one over indulges in them, one may be distracted from the Way to God.

⁷⁸³ "Tsk, tsk" (Arabic *kakh, kakh*): the clicking sound made when reproving a child who has taken something he should not. To the present day, Khuzestan is the center for the growing of sugar cane in Iran.

⁷⁸⁴ 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz: 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz, the eighth Umayyad caliph who reigned from AH99/717CE to AH101/720CE. He was noted for his simplicity, piety, and his concern for the welfare of his subjects. He died at the age of 39.

⁷⁸⁵ "received the command": That is, he died.

time she came into the house, and ('Umar) smelled the scent of the musk on her head-veil. "What is this?" he demanded. She replied: "I was weighing the musk. My hand took on the scent. I wiped it on my veil." 'Umar (R) took the veil from her, washed it, and then rubbed it in earth, smelling it from time to time, until none of the scent (of the musk) remained. Then he returned it to her. This amount is within the scope of leniency,⁷⁸⁶ but 'Umar desired to keep the door to this closed lest it lead to something else, or to have passed over the lawful out of fear of the unlawful and to obtain the spiritual reward of the pious.

Ahmad Hanbal was asked about the person in the mosque who burns incense which is the property of the sultan. He said: "One must go out so as not to smell it, for this is very close to the forbidden." The point is the amount of the scent that would reach a person and infuse his garments. It may be that it is not within the scope of leniency. And he was asked: "If a person obtains a piece of paper containing Traditions, is it lawful for him to copy them without the permission of the owner?"⁷⁸⁷ He replied: "No."

'Umar bin Khattab (R) had a wife whom he loved. When he achieved the caliphate, he divorced her fearing that she might intercede in his affairs (of state) and that he might not have the strength to oppose her.

Know that every permitted thing that refers to the intentions of the world are of this kind. When (a person) becomes involved with one, it may throw him into other matters. Indeed, anyone who consumes the lawful to the degree of satiety will remain deprived of the degree of the pious. This is because eating one's fill of the lawful excites the carnal appetites, and then one falls into the quest for (satisfying) them. It is feared that improper thoughts may appear, and it is feared that looking (covetously) may commence. Looking at the property of the worldly and their gardens and pavilions is part of this. They excite the greed for the world and, then, one pursues such things and does the unlawful. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "*The love of the world is the source of all error.*" The love of the world is the source of all sins. And the desire for the permitted (things of the) world, for the love of the permitted things of the world is received whole-heartedly and this throws (one) into much seeking of the world which cannot be accomplished without sin—until one comes to remember God Most High (only) with difficulty. The chief of all of these miseries is that the neglect of God Most High triumphs in the soul.

⁷⁸⁶ That is, the manner in which the scent had been applied to the veil was permissible and not unlawful.

⁷⁸⁷ Persian text of HK edition modified in accordance with the Arabic of *The Revival*, per note in AA edition of text.

And it was for this that Sufyan Thawri (R) as he passed by the exalted gate of a noble in the company of another who looked at it, forbade his friend (from doing so), saying: "If thou wouldst not look at it, he would not squander money on it. Thou becomest a partner in the tyranny of his extravagance."

Ahmad Hanbal was asked about plastering the walls of houses and mosques. He said: "It is lawful for the floor so that dust not arise. As for plastering the walls, I loathe it because it is ostentation." The great ones of the forefathers have said: "The religion of him whose clothes are slight and thin is slight." The gist of this section is that one should refrain from the lawful fearing that it may lead to the unlawful.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is the scrupulousness of the truly righteous, who avoid things lawful also that do not lead one to the unlawful. For, for some reason a sin may have been committed in obtaining it. Examples of this are that Bishr Hafi (R) would not drink water from a canal that a ruler had dug; a party on the way to perform the Greater Pilgrimage would not drink the water of a reservoir that had been dug by a ruler; and some people would not eat the grapes of a garden the water for which was supplied by a canal dug by the ruler.

Ahmad Hanbal disapproved of sewing and doing business in the mosque. He was asked about a spinner sitting and spinning in the domed chamber of a mausoleum. He disliked this and said: "A mausoleum is for the Hereafter."

A male slave took a lamp from the residence of a king. (The slave's) master extinguished the lamp. The strap of someone's shoe became undone. The torch of the king was being carried. He avoided that light lest it make the strap beautiful. A woman was spinning. The light from the king's torch passed over her. She rose and did not spin in that light.⁷⁸⁸

Dhu al-Nun⁷⁸⁹ the Egyptian was thrown into prison. He went hungry for several days. A pious woman who was his disciple sent him food (paid for) by her work as a spinner, but he did not eat it. Then the woman rebuked him, saying: "Thou knewest that what I sent thee was lawful and thou wert hungry! Why didst thou not eat it?" He replied: "Because it came to me on the tray of a tyrant and in the hand of a jailer." So, he had abstained because his receiving it was through the

⁷⁸⁸ The point of these anecdotes is that the light was from the ruler's property and al-Ghazzali considered the property of kings unlawful, or at best doubtful. The three persons refrained even using the light that fell from such a source.

⁷⁸⁹ Dhu al-Nun: Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Abū al-Fayḍ Thawabān bin Ibrāhīm. Living in Egypt, he was a famous mystic of Nubian origin. Qushayri cites a large number of anecdotes about him, as does Hujwiri. 'Attar also mentions him. He died AH245/859-60CE.

strength of the hand of an oppressor, and that strength had come from (consuming) the unlawful. This is the greatest degree of caution in this section.

It may be that a person who does not know the truth of this be led by scruples to not eating any food from the hand of any sinner. This is not the case. It is restricted to the oppressor who consumes the unlawful and who derives his strength from doing so. However, if some one, for example, commits adultery, his strength does not derive from adultery. Therefore, the strength by which he presents the food does not derive from unlawful deeds.

Sari Saqati says: "One day I came upon some water in the desert and saw some greenery. I said: 'Let me eat and drink of this, for if there be anything lawful that I have ever eaten or drunk, it will be this.' I heard a voice saying: 'Whence came the strength which has delivered thee to this place?'" He said: "I became regretful and sought forgiveness (from God)."

This is the degree of the truly righteous. They thought subtle thoughts in these precautions. Now, this has been changed into the care in washing clothes and seeking water. But (the truly righteous) would have taken this laxly. They went about barefooted and purified themselves with whatever water they found. However, that purification is an external adornment and for the people to see, but within, the spirit has a great greed. It keeps Muslims occupied with (the externals) deceptively. The adornment of the inner self, which is where God looks, is much more difficult.

THE FIFTH DEGREE is the scrupulousness of the proximate ones (to God)⁷⁹⁰ and the Unitarians⁷⁹¹ who consider everything unlawful for themselves—eating, sleeping, talking, all of it—except that it be (in the service of) God Most High. These are a people who have become of one ambition and one character. They are perfect monotheists.

A story is told about Yahya bin Yahya, that he had taken some medicine. His wife said: "Walk about the house a little." He said: "I do not consider such walking proper. I have kept count for thirty years so that I do not make any move except for my own religion."

Thus, these people do not move save with religious intentions. If they eat, they eat no more than is necessary to maintain their minds and

⁷⁹⁰ "the proximate ones (to God)" (*muqarrabān*): literally, "those who are brought near." The word is used several times in the Quran (in Surah 83, vv. 21 & 28, for example) to denote those favored angels and persons who are in close attendance to God Most High. More generally, it can mean "close companion, intimate, confidante," etc.

⁷⁹¹ "Unitarians" (*muwahhidān*): believers in the absolute unity of God, not to be confused with the members of the modern Unitarian Church, the tenets of which are quite different.

lives in order to have the strength for worship. If they speak, they say that which is in the path of their faith. Everything other than this, they hold unlawful.

These are the degrees of scrupulousness. Indeed, thou wilt not hear less than this. Thou knowest thyself; thou knowest thine own worthlessness. If thou desirest to be in the first degree, which is the degree the level of scrupulousness of abstention, so that thou may not be called a sinner, thou wilt be incapable (of doing so). When the affair reaches talk, thou openest thy mouth wide and talk of the kingdom of heaven; but thou disdainest the clear speech which is in the study of the Religious Law. Instead, thou wishest to talk incoherently with prolixity.

In the Traditions, it is related that the Messenger (S) said: "The worst people are those who maintain themselves in affluence, eat many kinds of food and wear many kinds of clothing, and then, when they open their mouths, they utter pious things." May God Most High protect us from these calamities by His Own grace.

PART THREE: CONCERNING THE SEPARATION OF THE LAWFUL FROM THE UNLAWFUL AND AN INVESTIGATION OF THAT

Know that a group of people have thought that all the goods of the world are unlawful, or (at least) most of them. They are of three kinds: Those who are overwhelmed by precaution and scrupulousness have said: "We should eat nothing except the plants which are in the desert and the flesh of fish, hunted prey, and the like." A group overcome by sloth and carnality have said: "No distinction should be made; we should eat of everything." And a group closer to moderation has said: "God Most High created it; everything must be eaten, but in the amount of one's need."

However, all three of these are definitely in error. Indeed, the correct view is that lawfulness is always clear, as is unlawfulness. Doubtfulness is in the middle until the Resurrection,⁷⁹² just as the Messenger (S) has said.

That person who supposes that most of the property of the world is unlawful is mistaken. There is much that is unlawful, but not *most*. There is a difference between *much* and *most*; just as there are many sick people, travelers, and soldiers, but they are not the majority. And there are many oppressors, but there are more who are oppressed. We have spoken about the nature of this error in *The Revival* with explanations and proofs.

⁷⁹² That is, disagreements about the doubtful will be settled on the Day of Resurrection.

The main point is that thou shouldst understand that people have not been commanded to consume (only) that which in the knowledge of God Most High is lawful, for a person has not the ability to do that. Rather, they have been commanded: "Eat that which ye believe to be lawful until the unlawfulness of it has been established." This is always easily come by. The proof of this is that the Messenger (S) purified himself from the water-pot of a polytheist. And 'Umar (R) purified himself from the pitcher of a Christian woman. If they were thirsty, they would drink, but drinking the impure is not lawful. It is probable that their hands were unclean from drinking wine or eating carrion, but since the impurity was not (directly) known by them, they deemed them clean.

The Companions used to eat the food in every city they came upon, and they would conduct business—even though in their times, (the inhabitants of those towns) were all thieves, usurers, and wine-sellers. They did not abstain from the entire world, nor did they consider everything equal. They were not content with the amount of necessity. Consequently, thou must know that, with respect to thee, people are of six kinds:

THE FIRST KIND is the unknown person. Thou knowest nothing of his righteousness or corruption. When thou art in a strange city, it is lawful to buy bread from whomever thou wishest, or have transactions with them. Everything that is in (a person's) possession is superficially his property. This is sufficient evidence. (A contractual agreement) with him cannot be nullified except in the case of evidence of unlawfulness. However, if a person hesitates and seeks out a person who knows something of the other's character, it is out of the scrupulousness; but it is not an obligation.

THE SECOND KIND is the one thou knowest to be righteous. Eating from his property is lawful and there is no hesitation out of scrupulousness. Rather, such (scrupulousness) would be a misgiving (prompted by Satan). And should that person be hurt by thy hesitation, such an injury would be a sin, for thinking evil of the righteous is itself a sin.

THE THIRD KIND is one whom thou knowest to be unjust—such as Turks, or royal operatives—or thou knowest that all of his wealth, or most of it, has been unlawfully obtained. One must avoid his property—unless thou knowest that it has been lawfully obtained—and here an obvious sign appears from his circumstance, for his hand is the hand of a usurer.

THE FOURTH KIND is the one, most of whose wealth thou knowest to be lawful, but not absolutely free of the unlawful in that he is

a village magistrate and his is a government office, or he is a merchant who conducts business with the ruler, even though most of his property is lawful. It is permitted to accept from that larger part which is lawful. However, avoidance of this is an important scruple

'Abdullah Mubarak's broker wrote to him from Basrah: "There is business to be done with those who do business with the rulers, is it lawful to do business with them?" He replied: "If they have no business other than that with the rulers, then do not do business with them. However, if they do business with others too, it is lawful to do business with them."

THE FIFTH KIND is one with whose oppression thou art not acquainted and thou hast no information about (the source of) his wealth. Yet, thou seest the signs of injustice about him, such as the headgear, robes, and the appearance of the military. This, too, is an obvious sign and one should avoid doing business with him until thou knowest whence he obtains the wealth he gives to thee.

THE SIXTH KIND is that thou dost not see any sign of oppression on the person, but thou dost see a sign of disobedience (of God's Law) about him, such as the wearing of silk, the possession of household goods made of gold, or thou knowest that he drinks wine and looks at women not of the prohibited classes.⁷⁹³ The truth of this that thou shouldst not avoid his property, for (his behavior) does not change it into the unlawful more than that which has been said: "Since he considers (his behavior) lawful, it may be that he also does not abstain from the unlawful." In this, it is not possible to make a judgment about the unlawfulness of his property, for no one is innocent of sin and there are many people who avoid injustice, even though they do not avoid sin.

This rule in the difference between the lawful and the unlawful must be observed: if one eats something unlawful unknowingly, he will not be help culpable. Just as formal prayer with some uncleanness (on one's person or clothing) is not lawful, but if the person does not realize that there is some uncleanness, he is not guilty (of any lapse). Should he realize it after the formal prayer, in one opinion he does not have to make up the prayer, for the Messenger (S), while performing a formal prayer, took off his shoes and did not start the prayer over again. He said: "Gabriel, on whom be peace, informed me that the shoes were soiled."

Know that every place where we have said: "Scrupulousness is important even if it is not an obligation," it is fitting that one enquire of (the owner of the goods) about their source on the condition that his feelings are not injured. If the person will be distressed by such a

⁷⁹³ "women not of the prohibited degrees" (*nā mahram*):

question, asking it is unlawful. For, scrupulousness is a precaution, while injuring the feelings of others is (definitely) unlawful. Rather, one should be kind and find some pretext not to eat of it. If one cannot do that, eat so that he will not be hurt. To ask another person about this from whom the first might hear (of thy questioning) is unlawful. For this is spying, backbiting, and suspicion. All of these are unlawful. They do not become permissible for taking precautions.

The Messenger (S) was a guest and did not ask. He accepted gifts and did not ask whether it was a gift or a voluntary charity, except when the cause for doubt was obvious. In the beginning, when he went to Madinah, he would ask whether anything given to him was a gift or charity, as there was room for doubt, and no one's feelings were hurt by this.

Know that if, in a market, the property of a ruler is placed for sale, or sheep taken as plunder, and if one knows that most of the property in that market is unlawful, one should not buy (anything) before asking and enquiring about its origin. If most of it is not unlawful, buying without asking is lawful, but asking out of scrupulousness is important.

PART FOUR: CONCERNING THE STIPENDS GIVEN BY RULERS, GREETING THEM, AND ACCEPTING THAT PART OF THEIR WEALTH WHICH IS LAWFUL

Know that everything that is the hands of the rulers of this era⁷⁹⁴ is from the taxes paid by Muslims, from confiscation, or from bribery, all of which are unlawful. The lawful in their hands is of three kinds of wealth: the property taken from the unbelievers as booty (in war), the poll tax⁷⁹⁵ paid by the protected non-Muslims—when it is collected according to the conditions of the Religious Law, and the legacies that fall in their hands from those who die without heirs, as that property is for common interest.

Since the times are thus, when lawful property is rare and most is from the unlawful and from confiscation, it is not proper to accept anything from them so long as thou dost not know that it has been (obtained) in a lawful manner: that is, from war booty, the poll-tax, or legacies.

It is lawful that a king, too, cultivate a property. That is lawful for him. But if the labor is by *corvée*, doubtfulness infuses it, even if it does not become unlawful. If he purchases a property in trust,⁷⁹⁶ it is also

⁷⁹⁴ Ghazzali, of course, is referring to his own era.

⁷⁹⁵ "poll tax" (*jizyah*): See Note 521.

⁷⁹⁶ "property in trust": *dhimmah*.

his property, but as the price paid for it may come from unlawful sources, there is room for doubt (about its lawfulness).

Therefore, everyone who receives a stipend from a king, if it is derived from his private property, in an amount sufficient to be lawful, but if it is charged to legacies or funds for the common good, it is not lawful, so long as the common welfare of the Muslims is not dependent upon that person, as would be in the case of a jurisprudent, judge, theologian, endowments commissioner, or a physician.

In summary, a person who works in a profession in which the public welfare lies, and students are counted among these, as is the person who is poor and incapable of earning his livelihood—such people all have rights in this. But as for the learned and others of that description, it is lawful—if they do not dissemble with the official of a ruler in this and do not agree with them in wrong acts and do not give sanction to them in (their) oppression. On the contrary, they should not approach them. If they do so, it is under the conditions of the Law, the description of which we have (already) given.

EXCURSUS: CONCERNING THE RELATIONS OF PEOPLE WITH RULERS
AND THE OFFICIALS OF RULERS

Know that there are three situations for religious scholars and rulers:

ONE IS THAT one does not go near them, nor do they come near them. The safety of religion lies in this.

THE SECOND SITUATION is that they go to the ruler and give him a salutation. In the Religious Law, this is despised greatly, unless there be a necessity. For the Messenger (S) described the attributes of the oppressive ruler and then said: "Whoever seeks distance from them has been delivered." And he said: "After this, there may be tyrannical rulers. Whoever winks at their lies and injustice and consents to them, is not of me and at the Resurrection he will not be allowed to approach my pool (of Kawthar)." And he said: "To God Most High the most inimical of the religious scholars are those who call upon princes." And he said: "The worst rulers are those who go the religious scholars." And he said: "The religious scholars are trustees of the messengers (of God) so long as they do not mix with kings. When they do that, they betray their trust. Avoid them and stay away from them."

Abu Dharr⁷⁹⁷ said to Salamah:⁷⁹⁸ "Stay far from the court of the king, for nothing of his world will come to thee from which its increase

⁷⁹⁷ Abu Dharr: Abu Dharr Ghaffari, see Note 596.

will not subtract from thy religion." And he said: "There is a valley in hell in which there is no one save the savants who pay visits on kings." 'Ubadah bin al-Samit⁷⁹⁹ says: "The friendship of religious scholars and the ascetics with princes is proof of (their) hypocrisy. And their friendship with the rich is the proof of (their) dissimulation." Ibn Mas'ud says: "There is the man of sound religion who goes to a rich man and returns without religion." They asked: "In what manner?" He said: "He seeks their agreement for something which arouses the ire of God Most High." Fudayl⁸⁰⁰ says: "As much as a learned person approaches a king he distances himself from God Most High." Wahb⁸⁰¹ says: "The damage done to the Muslims by these religious scholars who visit a king is greater than the damage done by gamblers." And Muhammad bin Salamah⁸⁰² says: "A fly on a person's feces is better than the religious scholars in the court of a king."

EXCURSUS: [THE SINS OF APPROACHING THE UNJUST]⁸⁰³

Know that the reason for these strictures is that whoever goes near a king is in danger of falling into sin: either in behavior, in speech, in remaining silent, or in belief.

AS FOR THE SIN IN BEHAVIOR: it is usually the case that the palaces (of the unjust) have been seized forcibly. So, it is not right to enter that place. If, for example, one is in the desert or an open field, their tents and furnishings are unlawful. It is not right to enter or step upon (the carpets). And if, for example, one is on permissible land—without carpets of tents—and he greets (an unjust person) and bows his head to him, he has abased himself to an oppressor, and that is not lawful. Indeed, in the Traditions it is related that whoever humbles himself before a powerful person because of his power and wealth, even if that person is not unjust, loses two portions of his faith.

Therefore, nothing other than a salutation is permitted. As for kissing his hand, bowing low, and lowering the head; all of this is improper, except before a just ruler, the learned, or those who by cause

⁷⁹⁸ Salamah: Salamah bin 'Amr bin al-Akwā' al-Aslamī. A Companion of the Prophet who took part in several military expeditions.

⁷⁹⁹ 'Ubadah bin al-Samit ('Ubadah bin al-Ṣamit): One of the Ansar (*Anṣār*: Helpers) and one of the twelve who pledged allegiance to him at Al-'Aqabah and also one of the seventy at the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah. He fought in all of the battles and died AH34/654-5CE.

⁸⁰⁰ Fudayl: Fudayl 'Iyād, see Note 670.

⁸⁰¹ Wahb: Probably Wahb bin Munabbih, see Note 819.

⁸⁰² Muhammad bin Salamah: An anecdote about the encounter of a man by this name with a Najdi girl is related by Ibn Khallikan, who also mentions him in other places. Perhaps this is he whom Ghazzali is quoting.

⁸⁰³ From the AA text.

of their religion deserve this deference. Some of the forefathers exceeded this and would not return the salutation of unjust persons in order to show their contempt for them because of their oppression.

AS FOR THE SIN IN SPEECH: It is that one offer supplications for them and say, for example: "May God grant thee life and shower His blessings upon thee!" This and things like it are not fitting, for the Messenger (S) says: "Whoever, on behalf an oppressor, supplicates (God) for his lengthy life desires that there will always be someone sinning against God on earth." Consequently, no such supplication is appropriate, except to say: "*May God improve thee,*" or "*May God make thee successful in good deeds, may God lengthen thy life in obedience to Him.*" When one has finished the supplication, it is usual to show one's eagerness to be of service by saying: "I always desire to be continually at thy service." If this eagerness is not in one's heart, one has uttered a lie and has been hypocritical unnecessarily. If one does feel that in one's heart, any heart that is eager to see the unjust is devoid of the light of being of a Muslim. Indeed, thou shouldst detest the sight anyone who opposes God Most High, for he opposes thee.

After finishing this, one begins to praise (the oppressor's) justice, fairness, generosity, and things resembling those. These are not untainted with lies and hypocrisy. The least is that it encourages the heart of the oppressor, and this is not right. When finishing this, it is usual that the tyrant utter some nonsense, and (the listener) must nod his head and validate (his words). All of this is sinful.

AS FOR THE SIN OF REMAINING SILENT: That is that one see in (the oppressor's) residence silken furnishings and pictures (of living beings) upon the walls while he is wearing garments of silk and golden rings and uses silver ewers and utters foul words and lies. Amidst all of this, an accounting⁸⁰⁴ is necessary and one should not remain silent. If one is afraid to call to account, one is excused, but there is no excuse for going (to the king) unnecessarily. It is not proper to be in a place of sin unnecessarily where one cannot call (sinners) to account.

AS FOR THE SIN OF THE SOUL AND BELIEF: It is that one incline (to a king) and like him and humble oneself believing (in him). One looks at his comforts and the desire for the world pulses in one. The Messenger (S) says: "*O people of the emigration! Go ye not to the worldly, for they will be angered by the provisions God has provided you.*" Jesus (A) says: "Do not look at the property of the worldly, for the brightness of their world will take away the sweetness of faith from your souls."

⁸⁰⁴ "accounting": Ghazzali uses the word *hisbat* which refers to a particular institution in Islam and will be discussed in Chapter Nine below.

Therefore, from all of this thou must know that there is no permission to go to any tyrannical person, except for two reasons: One is that there is a command from the ruler, with coercion. Should one disobey, there is the fear that one may be tormented, or that the majesty of the king may be harmed, prompting his subjects to become audacious.⁸⁰⁵ The other is that one's rights have suffered some injustice, or for the sake of interceding for the rights of a Muslim. There is leniency in these on the condition that one does not lie, does not laud (the ruler), and does not withhold harsh counsel. If one fears that the counsel will not be received kindly, or if one knows that he will not accept it, one must (at least) refrain from false praise. There are those persons who give themselves airs, saying: "I shall go to intercede." But, if the matter is taken care of through the intercession of another, or another finds acceptance, he becomes upset. This is a sign that he does not go out of necessity.

THE THIRD SITUATION is that one does not go to the rulers, but the rulers come to one. The requirement of this is that when he offers a salutation, one return it. If one shows honor and stands, it is lawful, because (the ruler's) coming is in honor of knowledge, and this goodness deserves honoring, just as injustice deserves contempt. However, if one does not rise and shows one's disdain for the world, it is to be preferred, unless it is feared that (the ruler) will cause trouble for him lest the awe of the ruler may decrease among his subjects.

When he takes his seat, three kinds of counsel become obligatory: One is that if (the king) does anything not knowing that it is unlawful, (the scholar) should acquaint him of that. Another, if (the ruler) does something and knows that it is unlawful—such as injustice or lewdness—one should threaten (him with divine punishment) and counsel him, saying: "The pleasures of the world are not worth the loss of the kingdom of the Hereafter for their sake," and things of that nature. The third is that if the opportunity arises and if one thinks (the ruler) will tolerate it, one should admonish him about things neglected concerning the people's care and welfare.

These three are obligatory upon the person who goes to the king if there is the hope of acceptance. If he be a qualified scholar, his words will not be devoid of acceptance. However, if there is a covetousness for (the ruler's) world, it is better that he remain silent, for there will be no benefit except that he will be laughed at.

⁸⁰⁵ In the view of most Muslim thinkers, even a bad ruler is better than no ruler at all. Tyranny is better than anarchy.

Muqatil bin Salih⁸⁰⁶ says: "I was with Hammad bin Salamah.⁸⁰⁷ In each of his rooms, there was a copy (of the Holy Quran), a straw mat, a small leathern bag, and water-pot for purification. Someone knocked on the door. He said: 'It is Muhammad bin Sulayman,⁸⁰⁸ the caliph of the time. He entered, sat down, and said: 'For what reason is it that whenever I visit thee my heart becomes full of awe?' Hammad said: 'Because the Messenger (S) has said that everyone is afraid of the scholar whose aim is the knowledge of God Most High. If his goal is the world, he is afraid of everyone.' Then (the caliph) presented (Hammad) with 40,000 dirhams and said: 'Spend this in some way.' (Hammad) said: 'Go and give it to its rightful owner.' (The caliph) swore that he had obtained the money from a lawful legacy. (Hammad) said: 'I have no need of it.' (The caliph) said: 'Divide it among the Muslims and the deserving.' (Hammad) replied: 'It may be that I divide it justly, but some one may say that I did not observe equity. It will turn into a sin and I do not want that.' And he did not accept it."

The state and speech of the religious scholars with kings was like that. When they went to them, it was like the time Tawus (bin Kaysan)⁸⁰⁹ went to Hisham bin 'Abd al-Malik,⁸¹⁰ who was the caliph. When Hisham arrived at Madinah, (Tawus) said: "Bring some one of the Companions to me." They brought Tawus to him. When he entered, he took off his shoes and said: "*Peace be upon thee, O Hisham! How art thou, O Hisham?*" Then Hisham became greatly enraged (at this familiarity) and decided to execute (Tawus). They said: "This is the sacred precinct of the Messenger (S) and this man is one of the great religious scholars; it cannot be done."

So (Hisham) said: "O Tawus, with what audacity didst thou do this?" (Tawus) asked: "What have I done?" (The caliph's) anger increased. He said: "Thou hast violated four rules of courtesy. One: thou didst take off thy shoes upon my carpet" This was repugnant to them because one was supposed to stand before them wearing stockings and

⁸⁰⁶ Muqatil bin Salih (Muqātil bin Ṣālih): besides his being a contemporary of Hammad bin Salamah (see Note 771), no further information presently available.

⁸⁰⁷ Hammad bin Salamah: see Note 771.

⁸⁰⁸ Muhammad bin Sulayman: there is a possibility that this is a reference to the Hasanid Muhammad bin Sulaymān who established himself at Madinah in opposition to the Abbasids in the late 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century. No available sources show a caliph by the name of Muhammad bin Sulayman in the genealogical tables of the period.

⁸⁰⁹ Tawus (bin Kaysan): 'Abd al-Rahmān Tāwūs bin Kaysān Yamānī, one of the Followers of Persian extraction. His religious decisions are famous and he heard Traditions directly from Abu Hurayrah (see Note 406) and Ibn 'Abbas (see Note 357). He died at Makkah AH106/724-5CE. (*Lata'if*)

⁸¹⁰ Hisham bin 'Abd al-Malik (Hishām bin 'Abd al-Malik): Considered one of the three greatest Umayyad caliphs (the others being his father 'Abd al-Malik and Mu'awiyah I), he was an excellent administrator and the empire prospered during his reign at Damascus (AH105/724CE to AH125/743CE).

shoes; this is now the protocol in court of the caliph. "Next, thou didst not address me as Commander of the Believers; next thou didst address me by name without my nickname."⁸¹¹ This was displeasing to the Arabs. "And next thou didst sit down in front of me without permission and thou didst not kiss my hand."

Tawus replied: "As for my removing my shoes in front of thee, every day I take them off five times before my own Lord (Who is the Lord) of all creation. He does not get angry with me (for that). As for my not saying 'Commander of the Believers,' that was because not all the people agree to thy commandership; I was afraid that I would be speaking a lie. As for my addressing thee by name and without the nickname, God Most High addresses His Own friends by name, not by nickname. He said 'O Adam, O David, O John,'⁸¹² O Moses, O Jesus, but He addressed His enemies by their nicknames. He said: "*The hands of Abu Lahab will perish.*"⁸¹³ As for my not kissing thy hand, I heard the Commander of the Believers, 'Ali (R) say: 'It is not lawful for anyone to kiss a hand, except the hand of one's wife in passion, or the hand of a child in compassion.' As for my sitting in front of thee, I heard the Commander of the Believers, 'Ali (R) say: 'To whoever wants to see a man in hell, tell him to look at a man seated while all those before him are on their feet.'"

Hisham was pleased (by the words of Tawus). He said: "Give me some advice." (Tawus) said: "I heard 'Ali (R) say: 'There are snakes in hell, each as large as a mountain, and there are scorpions, each as large as a camel. They are waiting for princes who are unjust to their subjects.'" Having said this, (Tawus) rose and departed.

When Sulayman (bin) 'Abd al-Malik⁸¹⁴ was caliph, upon reaching Madinah he summoned Abu Hazim,⁸¹⁵ one of the great theologians of his time, and said to him: "For what reason do we detest death?" (Abu Hazim) replied: "Because thou hast made the world a flourishing place, but the Hereafter a ruin. Whoever must leave a

⁸¹¹ "nickname" (*kunya*): See Translator's Introduction. (Ghazzali uses *kunya* instead of *kunya*. They are the same.)

⁸¹² John (*Yahyā*): A reference to the John who is called "the Baptist" in Christian tradition. The *Yahyā* form of John is reserved for John the Baptist. Other Biblical Johns are called *Yūhanān*.

⁸¹³ (Q. 111:1) Abu Lahab (*Abū Lahab*: Father of Flame) was the epithet applied to 'Abdul 'Uzzah, the only time in the Quran that an opponent of the Prophet (S) was denounced by name. He was the Prophet's uncle and the only member of his clan to oppose his mission.

⁸¹⁴ Sulayman (bin) 'Abd al-Malik, a caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, reigned AH96/715CE to AH99/717CE.

⁸¹⁵ Abu Hazim: Abū Hāzim Salamah bin Dinār al-Fārsī al-ʿAraj. One of the Followers (the generations closely following the Companions) of Madinah, an important scholar and ascetic. He solved many moral and legal difficulties for his contemporaries. He died AH140/757-8CE. (*Lata'if*)

flourishing abode for an abode of ruins must sorrow." (The caliph) asked: "What will the condition of the people be when they go before God Most High?" He replied: "As for the doers of good it will be like the person who has returned from a journey, meeting his own beloved ones; as for the ones who have done evil, they will be seized as though they were fleeing slaves and brought before God by force." (The caliph) said: "I wish that I knew what my condition will be." (Abu Hazim) said: "Open thyself to the Quran so that thou may know that it says: *Surely the righteous are in bliss and surely the wicked are in hell.*" (Q. 82:13-14) (Sulayman) asked: "Then where is God's mercy?" He answered: "*Surely the mercy of God is near the doers of good.*" (Q. 7:56) It is near the beneficent."

The speech of the religious scholars with kings was like that. For the worldly scholars, their speech with them is of supplication, praise, and adulation. They are in search of something to say that will please them, and they look for tricks and leniency in order to achieve their ends. If they give advice, it is to validate their purpose. Its sign is that if that (same) advice is given by another, they become envious.

In whatever fashion it may be (accomplished), not seeing the unjust is better lest one associate with them. Neither should one associate with the people who associate with them. If a person is not able to avoid mixing with them so long as one does not flee from others and cut oneself off from them, one should retire into seclusion and abandon mixing with everyone.

The Messenger (S) says: "This people will always be under the protecting wing of God Most High so long as the religious scholars do not mix with princes." In sum, the cause of the corruption of the subjects is the corruption of the kings and rulers, and the corruption of the rulers is from the corruption of the religious scholars who neither correct nor forbid them.

EXCURSUS: [THE PREREQUISITES OF ACCEPTING THINGS FROM RULERS]⁸¹⁶

Should a ruler send some property to a scholar for distribution amongst charities, if one knows that there is a definite owner for it,⁸¹⁷ it is of course not proper to distribute it. Indeed, one should say that it should be returned to its (rightful) owner. But, if the ownership is not clear, some religious scholars prohibit its acceptance and distribution, but in our opinion it is preferable that it be accepted and distributed amongst charities so that it will leave (the ruler's) hand and not become the means

⁸¹⁶ From the AA text.

⁸¹⁷ That is, if the property given by the ruler can be proven to have been taken forcibly or illegally from a verifiable person.

of his (further) injustice, while (by its distribution) the poor may obtain some ease. The judgment about this property is that it should reach the poor, but with three conditions:

THE FIRST CONDITION is that by (one's) accepting it, the ruler not think that his wealth is in itself lawful, because (in his thinking) if it were not lawful (the scholar) would not have accepted it.⁸¹⁸ The evil from this is greater than the merit of its (charitable) distribution.

THE SECOND CONDITION is that that scholar not be in a place where others may follow his example in accepting it, while remaining unaware of its distribution (to the poor) so that a group may suppose that Imam Shafi'i (R) has accepted money from the caliphs but be unaware that he had distributed all of it (to the poor).

Both Wahb bin Munabbih⁸¹⁹ and Tawus went to the brother of Hajjaj one cold morning. Tawus was counseling him. (The brother of Hajjaj) ordered that a mantle be put around Tawus' shoulders. Tawus was speaking and moving about so that the mantle fell off. Hajjaj's brother was aware of this and became angry. When they left, Wahb said: "O Tawus! If thou hadst accepted that mantle and given it to a poor person, it would have been better than angering him." Tawus said: "I was not secure that others who imitate me and accept something from him would not know that I gave it away to a poor person."

THE THIRD CONDITION is that friendship with an oppressor not be born in one's heart for sake for the wealth that he has sent one for distribution. For, the friendship of the unjust is the cause of many sins, which are (in turn) the cause of flattery.⁸²⁰ It becomes the reason for anxiety about (the oppressor's) loss of office or death and the cause of his delight in the increase of (the oppressor's) pomp and power.

It is for this reason that the Messenger (S) said: "O Lord God! Do not permit any sinner to do me a good turn lest my heart then incline to him." He said this because the heart necessarily inclines to anyone who does thee a good turn. God Most High says: "*And incline not to those who do wrong, lest the Fire touch you.*" (Q. 11:113)

⁸¹⁸ It must be remembered that Ghazzali holds that most of the wealth of rulers is unlawful, but some categories are lawful (see above). The uncritical acceptance of such a gift from the king might imply the lawfulness of all of the king's wealth, and that would be a great wrong, in Ghazzali's view.

⁸¹⁹ Wahb bin Munabbih: A transmitter of Tradition and an authority on both Jewish and Christian lore, of Yemenite—possibly ultimately Persian—origin. He was born c. AH34/654CE and died in either AH110/728CE or AH114/732CE.

⁸²⁰ "flattery" (*mudāhanat*): the word of Arabic origin comes from a root (*d-h-n*) relating to oil and lubrication. Hence, this form can mean acting hypocritically, dissembling, cheating, etc., as well as flattery.

One of the caliphs sent ten thousand dirhams to Malik Dinar. He distributed all of it and did not retain a single dirham. Muhammad (bin) Wasi' saw him and said: "Tell the truth, has thy heart inclined any more to friendship with him for that reason?" He said: "Yes." He said: "I was afraid of that. In the end, the evil of that wealth has done its work with thee."

One of the great men of Basrah accepted some wealth from a ruler and distributed it. He was asked: "Art thou not afraid that their friendship will quicken in thy heart?" He replied: "If a person takes my hand and leads me to heaven and then commits a sin, should I hold him as an enemy? Do I have enmity for that person who utilized him to take my hand and lead me to heaven?" If a person has this strength, there is no fear if he distributes their property.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCERNING THE DISCHARGE OF THE DUTIES OF ASSOCIATION WITH PEOPLE AND OBSERVING THE RIGHTS OF RELATIVES, NEIGHBORS, SLAVES, AND OBSERVING THE RIGHTS OF FRIENDS, THE POOR, AND THE BRETHREN FOR THE SAKE OF GOD

Know that the world is one station of the stations of the journey to God Most High. All in this station are travelers. Since the destination of journey of this caravan of travelers is the same, they are all as one. There must be friendship and unity among them and mutual aid. They must respect the rights of one another. We shall recount an explanation of the rights of association with people in three parts: First, Concerning Friendship and Brotherhood for the Sake of God; Second, Concerning the Rights of Friends; and Third, Concerning the Rights of Muslims, Family,⁸²¹ Relatives, Slaves, and Others.

PART ONE: CONCERNING FRIENDSHIP AND BROTHERHOOD FOR THE SAKE OF GOD MOST HIGH

Thou needest to know that friendship and taking (others) as brothers for the sake of God Most High are among the most meritorious of the acts of worship and have important places in religion. The Messenger (S) said: "For whomever God Most High wishes goodness, He grants him the sustenance of a suitable friend." And he said: "No two Muslims ever come together that there is not a benefit for each from the other in religion." And he said: "Whoever accepts some one as his brother for the sake of God Most High is given a high rank in heaven which cannot be attained by any other deed."

Abu Idris Khawlanī⁸²² said to Mu'adh:⁸²³ "I love thee for the sake of God Most High." (Mu'adh) replied: "Let there be glad tidings to thee for I heard the Messenger (S) say: 'At the Resurrection there will be chairs placed in a circle around the Throne of God upon which some people will be seated with faces shining like the full moon. All of the people will be anxious, but they will be secure. All will be in fear, but they will be tranquil. They are the saints of God Most High. Neither will they be in fear, nor will they sorrow.' They asked: 'O Messenger of God,

⁸²¹ Family: The word used here is *rahim*, and means "born from the same womb, uterine relatives."

⁸²² Abu Idris Khawlanī: Abū Idrīs ʿĀʾidh Allāh bin ʿAbdullāh al-Khawlanī (AH8/629-30CE to AH80/699CE). Considered one of the pious devotees, he settled in Damascus and taught in the mosque. He later became a judge. He transmitted many Traditions.

⁸²³ Mu'adh: Mu'adh Jabal (see Note 399).

who are these people?' He answered: '*Those who love each other in God.*'⁸²⁴ They are a group who love each other for the sake of God.'"

And the Messenger (S) said: "There are not two persons who love each other for the sake of God that the one more beloved by God is the one loves the other the most." And he said: "God Most High says: 'My love is a right for those who visit one another for My sake, who love each other for My sake, who are generous to each other with their wealth for My sake, and who aid each other for My sake.'" And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection God Most High will say: 'Where are those persons who loved each other for My sake so that I may keep them in My shadow on this day when there is no shade for the people in which to take refuge?'"

And he said: "There are seven persons on the Day of Resurrection who, when there will be no shade for anyone, will be in the shadow of God Most High: the just leader, the young person who began worshipping God Most High at the beginning of his youth, the man who leaves the mosque with his heart attached to the mosque until he returns to it again, two people who love each other for the sake of God Most High and who come together for that and separate for that, the person who remembers God Most High in private and whose eyes fill with tears, the man who when called by a magnificent and beautiful woman says to her: 'I fear God Most High,' and the man who gives voluntary charity with his right hand so that the left hand has no knowledge of it." And he said: "No one visits a brother for the sake of God Most High save that an angel cries out, saying: 'Be happy and blessed! Thine is the heaven of God Most High!'"

And he said: "A man was going to visit a friend. God Most High sent an angel in his path who asked: 'Where goest thou?' He replied: 'To visit such-and-such a brother.' (The angel) asked: 'Dost thou have some business with him?' He said: 'No.' (The angel) asked: 'Art thou related to him in some way?' He said: 'No.' (The angel) asked: 'Has he done something good for thee?' He answered: 'No.' (The angel) said: 'Then why art thou going to him?' He answered: 'I love him for the sake of God.' (The angel) said: 'Then, God Most High has sent me to thee to give thee the good news that God Most High loves thee because of thy love for him, and has made heaven an obligation for both of you yourselves.'"⁸²⁵ And the Messenger (S) said: "The strongest resort of faith is love and enmity for the sake of God Most High."

⁸²⁴ *Those who love each other in God*: Arabic: *al-mutahābbūna fi-llāh*.

⁸²⁵ In the final sentence of this passage, the plural "you" (*shumā*) is used, thereby including the addressee and his friend, while the preceding sentences used the singular "you" (*tū*), a great advantage for languages such as Persian which retain the distinction between singular and plural in second-person pronouns.

God Most High sent revelations to some of the prophets (A) saying: "With this asceticism that thou dost practice thou dost hasten thine own comfort so that thou may be delivered from the world and its sorrow. As for these acts of worshipping Me that thou dost engage in, with them thou obtainest thine own glory. But, behold! Hast thou never loved My friends for My sake and hast thou never been the enemy of My enemies?"

God Most High revealed to Jesus (A): "If thou dost perform all the acts of worship of the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and hast not made friendship and enemies for My sake, there is no profit." And Jesus (A) said: "Make thyself a friend of God Most High by being inimical to His enemies and those who rise against Him. Make thyself near to God Most High by distancing thyself from them. Seek the satisfaction of God Most High by becoming angry at them." He was asked: "O Spirit of God,⁸²⁶ with whom should we associate?" He said: "With those whom God reminds you to visit and whose discourse increases your knowledge and whose behavior makes ye more eager for the Hereafter."

God Most High sent a revelation to the messenger David, saying: "O David, why dost thou flee the company of men and sit alone?" (David) answered: "O Lord God! My love for Thee has driven the thought of people out of my heart and I abhor them all." (God) said: "O David! Awaken and take the hands of thy brothers. Avoid whoever is not thy companion on the way of religion, for he darkens thy heart and distances (thee) from thy Me."⁸²⁷

Our Messenger (S) said: "God has an angel, one half of whom is fire, the other half snow. He says: 'O Lord God, as Thou hast thrown friendship between fire and snow, throw friendship between the hearts of Thine Own suitable servants.'" And (the Messenger) said: "For those persons who have friendship for each other for the sake of God Most High, a red ruby column is set up on top of which are 70,000 pavilions. From there they will look down upon the inhabitants of heaven, and the light of their countenances will fall upon the inhabitants of heaven, like the light of the sun in this world. The people of heaven will say: 'Come, let us go to look at them.' They will see them clothed in green brocade. On their foreheads will be written *Those who love each other in God*:

⁸²⁶ Spirit of God (*Rūḥullāh*): An epithet for Jesus in Islamic discourse.

⁸²⁷ "and distances (thee) from thy Me" (*manat*): following HK's vowelizing. AA has no vowelizing indicated, and the ligature could be read as *minnat*, in which case the phrase would be "and distances (thee) from favor." "Thy Me" (or, in some places, "thy I") is rare in English, but less uncommon in Persian. The "Me" of course refers to God, and in these words God is stressing His closeness to David.

They are the friends of God Most High." And Ibn Sammak⁸²⁸ said at the time of his death: "O Lord God, Thou knowest that at the time I committed sins, I loved those who obeyed Thee. Make that the atonement for the other." And Mujahid⁸²⁹ says: "When the lovers of God Most High smile at each other, just as leaves fall from a tree, so do their sins fall away from them."

DISCLOSING WHAT THE TRUE LOVE FOR GOD MOST HIGH IS

Know that a friendship which happens with a person with whom one has been in the primary school, on a trip, in the academy, or in a neighborhood—and for those reasons friendship develops—is not of this kind. Nor is whomever thou lovest because he is of pleasant appearance, or whose speech is sweet of this kind. (The friendship) thou hast for anyone from whom thou receivest some dignity or property is also not of this kind, for all of these apply to the person who has no belief in God Most High or the Hereafter. Divine love is that which does not come about without faith, and this is of two degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is that thou lovest someone for some reason linked with him, but that motive is religious and for the sake of God Most High, as thou likest thy teacher because he teaches thee knowledge. That friendship is of a divine nature since thine aim for (acquiring) this knowledge is the Hereafter, not rank or wealth. If the object be the world, that friendship is not of that kind. If thou love thy student so that he learn from thee and may obtain the pleasure of God Most High through learning, (thou) obtainest the spiritual reward of teaching also. This is for the sake of God Most High. But if thou lovest (him) for the sake of dignity and retinue, it will not be of that kind. If a person gives voluntary charity and likes a person on the condition that he deliver that to the poor, or he invites some poor people and likes a person who prepares a good meal, then such friendship is for the sake of God. Indeed, if one likes someone and gives him bread and clothing to provide for him the leisure to worship (God), it is friendship for the sake of God, since his motive is the peace of mind for worship.

Many religious scholars and worshippers have had friendships with the rich and powerful for this reason. Both were counted as friends for the sake of God Most High. Moreover, if one loves his own wife because she keeps him from corruption and because of the bringing forth

⁸²⁸ Ibn Sammak: Ibn Sammāk, Abū al-ʿAbbās Muḥammad bin Sabīḥ. From Kufah, he was a preacher and an ascetic at the court of Harun al-Rashid. He died AH183/799-800CE.

⁸²⁹ Mujahid (*Mujāhid*): Probably Abū Bakr Aḥmad bin Mūsā. He lived in Baghdad from AH245-6/859CE to AH324/936CE, had numerous pupils and assistants, and helped in the determination of the seven authorized modes of reading the Quran.

of children who will supplicate for him, such love is for the sake of God Most High and everything thou spendest for her is a voluntary charity. Indeed, if one loves his student for two reasons: one that he serves him and the other that he gives him the peace of mind to perform his worship, that part which is for worship is counted as love for the sake of God most High and there is spiritual reward for it.

THE SECOND DEGREE is greater. It is that one love a person for the sake of God without having any expectations from him. Instead, it is by reason of obedience to God and for the love of Him that one loves the other. Moreover, because he is a servant of God and created by Him—such friendship is divine. It is greater, because this arises from the excess of one's love for God Most High, so much so that it reaches the boundaries of passionate love. Whoever is in love with someone, loves (that person's) district and neighborhood. He loves the walls of (that person's) house. Indeed, he loves the dog roaming the quarter's streets, and he likes that dog more than other (dogs). He is compelled to love the friend of his beloved, and beloved of his beloved, the people who obey the commands of his beloved, (the beloved's) servants, slaves, or relatives; all of these he loves out of necessity, for his love spreads to whatever has a relation with his beloved. As his love increases, so it increases with the others who follow and are connected with the beloved.

Therefore, whoever is overcome by love for God Most High to the boundaries of passionate love loves all of His servants, especially His friends. He loves all created things, for whatever (things) exist are all the signs of His devising and power. He is the beloved, and a lover loves the down on the cheek and the form of the beloved. The Messenger (S) honored and touched his eyes with the first fruits when they were brought to him, and he said: "The kinsman is a covenant with God Most High."

The love of God Most High is also of two kinds: some for the sake of the comfort of this world and the Hereafter, and others for the sake of God Most High (Himself). If nothing of the self is a consideration, then it is more complete. We shall explain this in the chapter on "Love" in the Fourth Pillar⁸³⁰ of this work.

In summary, the strength of one's love for God Most High is in accordance with the strength of one's faith. The stronger one's faith, the more overwhelming one's love is. Then, it spreads to the friends of God and those favored with His esteem. If love were devoid of benefit, love for the dead—from the prophets, saints, and the religious scholars—would not take hold. The love for all is obtained in one's heart. So, whoever loves the learned, the Sufis, [the Alawis,]⁸³¹ the ascetics, and

⁸³⁰ The Fourth Pillar, Chapter Nine.

⁸³¹ The Alawis, i.e., descendants of 'Alī ('*Alawīyān*): This is inserted in the HK edition but not found in the edition of Ahmad Aslam. The word, with a different vowel

their servants and devotees, loves them for the sake of God Most High. However, the amount of love is made known by their sacrifice of wealth and rank. There are people whose faith and love is so powerful that they hand over all of their wealth at once, as did Abu Bakr the Righteous (R). There are people who give one half of their wealth, as did 'Umar (R). And there are people who cannot afford to give more than a little. The heart of no believer is devoid of this love, even though it be weak.

DISCLOSING WHAT ENMITY FOR THE SAKE OF GOD MOST HIGH IS

Know that whoever loves those who obey (God) for the sake of God Most High must necessarily consider the unbelievers, the sinful, and the oppressive to be enemies for the sake of God Most High. For anyone who loves another is the friend of his (beloved's) friends and the enemy of his (beloved's) enemies. Those people are the enemies of God Most High. Consequently, if there be a sinful Muslim, one must love him for his being a Muslim and hold him as an enemy for his sinfulness. One must add the love and enmity together, just as when one rewards one of one's children while being harsh with and beating another. From one point of view, one loves the child; from another, one is its enemy. This is not impossible, for if a person has three children, one intelligent and obedient, another stupid and disobedient, and another stupid and obedient, the first he will love, the second he will dislike, and the third he will love from one aspect and dislike from another. The effect can be seen in behavior so that he honors one, berates the second, and holds the third between the two (extremes).

In summary, whoever sinfully opposes God Most High, should be treated in the same way that he does thee. Thou should oppose him according to his opposition to thee and thou shouldst be agreeable with him in accordance with his agreement with thee. This (attitude) should be reflected in speech, association, and dealings; so that to a rebel (against God), thou should offer a gloomy countenance and harsh speech, while with the person whose sin is greater, thou shouldst be gloomier. If he has passed all bounds, thou shouldst hold thy tongue and shun him. As for the unjust, thou shouldst be more excessive than for a sinner, except for the person who deprives thee of thy rights. In that case, forgiveness and patience are better.

The practice of the forefathers in this regard was various: Some were excessively harsh for the sake of the strength of religion and the administration of the Religious Law. Ahmad bin Hanbal was one of

(*ʿulwīyān*) would mean metaphorically "angels" or "planets," but that would appear to be out of context as the list is of classes of human beings.

these. He became very angry with Harith Muhasibi⁸³² because he had written about theology and rejected the Mu'tazilite views.⁸³³ (Ibn Hanbal) said: "In the books, thou explainest their flawed arguments and then repliest to them. It may be that some person read the flawed arguments and be influenced by them." Yahya Ma'in⁸³⁴ said: "I do not want anything from anyone; however, if the king gives me something, I shall accept it." (Ahmad bin Hanbal) was enraged by this and refused to talk with him until he had apologized and said: "I was jesting and making a joke." (Ahmad) replied: "Thou eatest by religion; do not play with it."

There were others who looked upon all with forbearance, and this changed to intention and thought. A person whose perspective is the (absolute) Unity of God and who sees everything as compelled by the forceful grasp of the Supreme Being looks upon them with the eye of mercy. This, too, is great; but it is the place of the deception of fools, for there is the person who harbors fawning inside him and thinks it to be the Unity. The sign of the Unity is that if they beat him, carry off his property, hold him in contempt, and scold him, he will not be angered. He looks upon (his oppressor) with kindness, since he looks at everything from the (aspect) of (absolute) Unity and the compulsion of the creature, just as the Messenger (S) said when his tooth was broken (in battle) and blood was flowing over him: "*O God, guide my people for they do not know.*" When one is not silent for one's own sake, but is silent in the cause of God Most High, this is fawning, hypocrisy, and foolishness; Unity has not conquered him. That the sin of the sinner does not turn him into (the sinner's) enemy is evidence of the weakness of his faith and his love (for God), just as when a person insults thy friend and thou dost not grow angry. It is the proof that, in reality, there is not love (thy heart).

⁸³² Harith Muhasibi: Hārith bin Asad al-Muḥāsibī, a noted Sufi, theologian, Traditionist, and jurist born in Basrah and died in Baghdad (AH243/857CE). He was the author of many books and an opponent of the Mu'tazilites. (*Al-Munjid*)

⁸³³ Mu'tazilite views: The Mu'tazilites were a sect founded by Wāsil bin 'Atā about AH110/728-9CE. They rejected the eternal attributes of God, fearing that they would lead to a blurring of the oneness of God and were called "divesters," because they had divested God of His attributes. They held that the Quran was created, that God was not the creator of evil, and that man had a free will. They denied predestination. See the standard works on Islamic theology and philosophy.

⁸³⁴ Yahya Ma'in: Yahyā bin Ma'in bin 'Awn, Abū Zakariyā' al-Baghdādī. An authority on Religious Law and the Traditions, he died at al-Madinah AH233/847-8CE.

EXCURSUS: [THE DEGREES OF ANGER AGAINST
THE OPPONENTS OF GOD MOST HIGH]⁸³⁵

Know that the degrees of the opponents of God Most High are various, and anger and intensity must vary with them:

THE FIRST DEGREE are the unbelievers. If they are warriors, then enmity with them is a religious obligation and dealing with them is by killing and taking as slaves.

AT THE SECOND DEGREE are the People of the Book.⁸³⁶ Enmity with them is a religious obligation and the dealing with them is holding them in contempt, not honoring them, and making their way narrow. As for friendship with them, it is extremely repugnant, to the point of being forbidden, for God Most High says: *Thou wilt not find those believing in God and the Last Day loving those who oppose God and His Messenger.* (Q. 58:22) The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever believes in God Most High and the Resurrection will not befriend the enemies of God Most High." Moreover, granting them authority, sending them on missions, relying upon them, and putting them in charge of Muslims, is demeaning for Muslims and is one of the great sins.

THE THIRD DEGREE is the innovator,⁸³⁷ a person who invites people to innovation (in religion). It is important to make plain (thy) enmity for him so that the people may despise him. It is preferable not to call him a Muslim and not to speak with him. One should not return his greeting, for when he invites, his evil is contagious. But, if he is of the common folk and does not propagandize, his affair is less serious.

IN THE FOURTH DEGREE is the rebel (against God), for in him there is sorrow for the people such as oppression, false testimony, capricious rule, satirical verse, backbiting, and causing disturbance amongst the populace. Turning away from such people and being severe with them is especially good. Friendship with them is extremely repugnant and approaches the degree of the unlawful—in evident religious opinion—but this does not come as an obligation.

AT THE FIFTH DEGREE is the person who drinks wine and engages in lewd behavior, but does not annoy anyone. His affair is easier, and kindness and counsel are to be preferred with him if there is hope that he will accept them. If not, one must turn away from him, but one should return his greeting and it is not proper to curse him. During the time of

⁸³⁵ From the AA text.

⁸³⁶ "the People of the Book" (*ahl-i dhimmat*): Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians living under the protection of Islam.

⁸³⁷ "innovator" (*mubtadi'*): or, heretic. A person who has corrupted or distorted the faith. In Arabic, *bid'at* means: innovation, novelty, or heresy. The word itself can have either a positive or negative connotation, depending upon context. In a religious context, it is usually used negatively.

the Messenger (S), someone drank wine a few times and was punished by beating. One of the Companions cursed him, saying: "How long will his corruption endure?" The Messenger (S) forbade him, saying: "The devil is enough of an enemy for him; do not be the aide of the devil against him."

PART TWO: CONCERNING THE RIGHTS AND CONDITIONS OF ASSOCIATION

Know that everyone is not suitable for association and friendship; rather, thou shouldst associate with a person who has three qualities:

THE FIRST QUALITY is that he be intelligent, for the companionship of a fool has no benefit and will end in aversion. The fool, when he wants to do thee a good turn, will do something foolish that will cause thee loss; but he will not realize it. It has been said: "Keeping one's distance from a fool is intimacy (with God) and looking at a the face of a fool is a mistake." The fool is he who does not know the reality of affairs and, when they are explained to him, does not comprehend.

THE SECOND QUALITY is a good nature, for there is no safety from the ill-natured. When that bad nature becomes active, it overturns thy rights without fear.

THE THIRD QUALITY is that he be righteous, for whoever is determined to commit sin does not fear God, and whoever does not fear God cannot be trusted. God says: *And follow not him whose heart We have made unmindful of Our remembrance and who follows his own inclinations.* (Q. 18:28) "Do not obey him whom We have made neglectful of Our remembrance and who is in pursuit of his own desires." If he be an innovator (in religion), one should keep one's distance from him, for his innovation may infect, or its evil touch (one).

There is no innovation worse than which has now appeared, for there is a group that says: "One must not judge God Most High's creatures and no one should be restrained from lewdness and sin, for we have no enmity with the creatures of God Most High and we do not have the audacity to have power over them." These words are the seed of Libertinism and the essence of atheism,⁸³⁸ and this heresy is (even) greater. Of course, one should not mix with these people, for these are words that are of an agreeable nature. In their aid, Satan causes them to adorn the heart and they quickly entice one into Libertinism.

⁸³⁸ "Libertinism" (*ibāḥāt*): See Note 165 above. "Atheism": *zandaqah*. See *zindiq* (atheist) in Note 671 above.

Ja'far Sadiq⁸³⁹ (R) has said: "One must avoid association with five persons: one, the liar, for thou wilt always be deceived with him; then, the fool, for when he wants to help thee he will cause thee loss and not know it; the miser who takes the best part of thy time; the coward who will cause thee loss when thou art in need; and the lewd person who will sell thee for a morsel of food and may even sell thee for less than a morsel." He was asked: "What is that?" He answered: "The desire for a morsel of food." Junayd says: "I prefer the association of good-natured sinners to that of bad-natured reciters (of the Quran)."

Know that all of these qualities are infrequently found together, but thou must recognize (thy) motive for association. If that motive be friendship, seek a pleasant nature. If the motive be worldly, seek generosity and liberality. If the motive be religion, seek knowledge and asceticism. For each one, there are different prerequisites.

Know that people are of three kinds: some are like food; there is no escaping them. Others are like medicine; there are times when they are needed, and that is all. And some are like an illness; one never has need of them, but they afflict most people. One must treat them with consideration until one is rid of them. In summary, one should associate with the person who gets some religious benefit from thee and thou from him.

DISCLOSING THE RIGHTS OF ASSOCIATION AND FRIENDSHIP

Know that when a covenant of brotherhood and association has been made, it resembles a marriage contract in that there are rights for (both parties). The Messenger (S) says: "The similitude of two brothers is that they are two hands washing each other." These rights are of ten kinds:

THE FIRST RIGHT is property. The highest degree is that one presents him his share and gives liberally, as has been revealed with respect to the Helpers:⁸⁴⁰ *And they prefer (them) over themselves, even though poverty may afflict them.* (Q. 59:9) The second degree is that one keeps the other as he does himself and considers property between himself and the other jointly held. The lowest degree is that one regards him as one does one's slaves and servants. One comes to his aid and need with what one has in excess when something happens to him before being asked. When he makes a request, there is need of discussion. This

⁸³⁹ Ja'far Sadiq: Ja'far bin Muhammad, see Note 662.

⁸⁴⁰ "Helpers" (*Anṣār*): The supporters of the Prophet in Madinah who made the pact of brotherhood with the emigrants who had accompanied him when he migrated from Makkah. The Helpers became models of generosity and friendship.

is outside of the degree of friendship, for thought and care has left one's heart. It is ordinary association and there is no value for this.

'Utbah al-Ghulam⁸⁴¹ (R) had a friend. ('Utbah) said: "I need 4,000 dirhams." (The friend) said: "Come and take 2,000 dirhams." ('Utbah) declined and said: "Hast thou no shame? Thou claimest friendship for the sake of God and then dost not bestow the world?"

Some people defamed the Sufis to one of the caliphs. Swords were brought to slaughter all of (the Sufis). Abu al-Hasan Nuri⁸⁴² was among them. He went forward so that they would kill him first. The caliph asked: "Why hast thou done this?" He answered: "They are my brothers in religion. I wished to bestow my life upon them a few moments earlier." Said the caliph: "People who are like this cannot be killed." They were all set free.

Fath Mawsili⁸⁴³ went to a friend's house when (the friend) was not at home. He told his (friend's) slave girl to bring a small chest, which he opened and took from it what he wanted. When (the friend) returned home that night and heard what the girl had done, he was so pleased that he set her free.

Someone came to Abu Hurayrah (R) and said: "I want to establish brotherhood between us." He replied: "Dost thou know what the rights of brotherhood are?" He answered: "No." (Abu Hurayrah) explained: "That thou not prefer thine own gold and silver over me." (The other) said: "I have not achieved that level." (Abu Hurayrah) said: "Then go, for this not suitable for thee."

Ibn 'Umar (R) says: "One of the Companions sent a roasted (sheep) head to someone. (The recipient) said: 'So-and so of my brothers takes precedence as he has a greater need,' and he sent it on to him. That person sent it to another brother, and so it went from hand to hand until it returned to him who had sent it first." There was a pact of brotherhood between Masruq⁸⁴⁴ and Khaythamah;⁸⁴⁵ both were in debt. One would pay off the loan of the other without his knowledge, and the other would pay off the other's loan without his knowledge.

The Commander of the Believers 'Ali (R) would say: "I prefer to give twenty dirhams to my brother than a hundred dirhams in voluntary

⁸⁴¹ 'Utbah al-Ghulam: 'Utbah bin Sallām al-Ghulām. An ascetic of Basrah who died AH167/783-4CE.

⁸⁴² Abu al-Hasan Nuri (Abū al-Ḥasan Nūrī): He was a disciple of Sari Saqati (see Note 763) and a prominent Sufi of his era. This would place him during the first half of the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century.

⁸⁴³ Fath Mawsili: Abū Naṣr bin Sa'īd Faṭḥ al-Mawṣilī. A Mamluk slave, he became an ascetic and died AH221/835CE.

⁸⁴⁴ Masruq: Masrūq bin al-Ajda'. He was one the circle of Ibn Mas'ud, an important Companion of the Prophet.

⁸⁴⁵ Khaythamah: other than that he was associated with Masruq (see Note 844). no further information about him presently available.

charity to the poor." The Messenger (S) was in a thicket and picked two twigs for use as toothbrushes. One was straight, the other bent. One of the Companions was with him. (The Messenger) gave him the straight one and kept the bent one for himself. (The Companion) said: "O Messenger of God, this one is better, thou shouldst have it." (The Messenger) replied: "No, a person does not associate with another for an hour without asking about the right of association: Did he observe it or let it lapse?" He was referring to that right of association, which is bestowing. And he said: "No two people associate together in friendship that the one more beloved by God Most High is the friendlier."

THE SECOND RIGHT is giving aid for all (of one's brother's) needs before he asks and tells (one), and addressing those tasks with a happy and a smiling face. The practice of the forefathers was to go to the door of their friends' houses every day and ask of the residents: "Do ye need anything? Do ye need any firewood or bread? Salt or cooking oil?" They did thus and considered it important. They were grateful to be allowed to do these things.

Hasan Basri would say: "My brothers are dearer to me than my family and children, for they teach me religion, while family and children teach me the world." 'Ata⁸⁴⁶ has said: "Seek out your brothers after three days. If they are ill, visit them. If they are busy, help them. If they have forgotten, remind them."

Ja'far bin Muhammad (R) says: "I hasten so that my enemy's need from me be accomplished, lest he be needful from me. What shall I do with respect to a friend?" Among the forefathers, there was a person who, when his brother died, took care of his family and children for forty years, in observance of the rights due because of association.

THE THIRD RIGHT is that of the tongue, which should always speak well with respect to the brethren. It should conceal their defects. If someone should talk about them in their absence, one should reply and suppose that (the brothers) are behind the wall listening, just as he would wish they would do on his behalf when he is absent. One should not flatter, and when another speaks, one should listen. One should not oppose and argue with him. One should not reveal his secrets, even after cutting off relations with him; for that is a reprehensible trait. One should keep quiet about his family, children, and goods. If someone reviles him, one should not relate that to him, for it may cause him sorrow; but if someone praises him, one should not hide it from him, for that would be envy. If he commits some fault with respect to one's rights, one should

⁸⁴⁶ 'Ata: 'Atā al-Sulamī of Basrah, a man known for his piety and asceticism. He died in AH121/739CE; or 'Atā bin Yassār, a protégé of the Prophet's wife Maymunah. He was an authority on the Traditions. He died about AH95/713CE.

not complain, but forgive him and remember one's own faults with respect to obedience to God Most High, so that one ought not to be surprised that a person might commit a fault with respect to him. One should know that if one wants to search for someone in whom there is no defect and from whom no fault comes, one will not find him and one must resign from the association with mankind.

In the Traditions, it is related: "The believer is always seeking forgiveness and the hypocrite is always seeking faults." One must conceal ten sins with one good deed, for the Messenger (S) says: "Seek refuge with God from the bad companion who, when he sees some badness, makes it known, but when he sees some goodness, he conceals it." One must forgive every fault that can be forgiven and interpret it in the best way possible, and not bear suspicion, for bad thoughts are forbidden.

The Messenger (R) said: God Most High has made unlawful (to the believer) four things from (another) believer: (his) wealth, blood, honor, and that bad thoughts be held about him." And Jesus (A) says: "What shall I say about the person who sees his own brother sleeping and pulls back the hem of his garment, exposing his privates and leaving them naked?" They asked him: "O Messenger of God, who holds that to be lawful?" "He replied: "Ye do, who know the defects of a brother and disclose them and talk about them so that others may know them."

It has been said thus: "When thou wantest to make a friend of some one, make him angry. Then send some one secretly to him to talk about thee. If he discloses any of thy secrets, know that he is not fit to be a friend." And it has been said: "Associate with the person who knows whatever God Most High knows about thee and, just as God Most High conceals it, so he conceals it too." Someone told his friend a secret. He said: "Dost thou remember it?" The other said: "No, I have forgotten it." And it has been said: "Anyone who turns away in four situations is not worthy of friendship: at the time of satisfaction, at the time of anger, at the time of craving, and at the time of the lust of the carnal appetite; indeed, at such times and for such reasons he should not set aside thy rights."

'Abbas⁸⁴⁷ said to his own son 'Abdullah⁸⁴⁸ (R): "'Umar (R) considers thee close to him and is presenting thee to the elders. Beware that thou observe five things: disclose not any secret, bear no tales about anyone to him, tell him no lie, contradict not anything he commands thee, and he must never see any treachery or rebellion (in thee)."

⁸⁴⁷ 'Abbas: The son of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and the paternal uncle of the Prophet, he was the most celebrated of the Companions and was the ancestor of the 'Abbasid dynasty during which classical Islamic culture at Baghdad reached its zenith. He died in AH32/652-3CE.

⁸⁴⁸ 'Abdullah: 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās, the son of 'Abbās bin 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, above.

Know that nothing ruins friendship more than disputing and contradiction at every word. The implication of rejecting the words of thy friend is that thou hast said that he is foolish and ignorant and that thou art intelligent and erudite. Thou hast considered thyself superior to him and have looked upon him with contempt. This is closer to enmity than love.

And the Messenger (S) says: "Do not contradict thy brother in what he says, and be not frivolous with him. Do not violate any promise thou hast made to him."

The great ones have spoken thus: "If thou sayest to thy brother 'Arise,' and he says 'How far?' he is not fit for association. Instead, he should arise and not ask." Abu Sulayman Darani says: "I had a friend. He would give me everything I wanted from him. One time I said: 'I need something.' He said: 'How much is necessary?' The sweetness of his friendship departed from my heart." In short, know that the support of love is agreement in everything that one may (properly) agree with.

THE FOURTH RIGHT is that one declare one's compassion and love in words. The Messenger (S) says: "*If one of you loves his brother, then let him inform him of that.*" Whoever loves someone must tell him. He said this so that a friendship for him may appear in the heart of the other too. Then, from the other side, his love will be doubled. Consequently, one must ask about his circumstances in words and show that one is the other's partner in joy and sorrow, that one considers the other's joy and sorrow as one's own joy and sorrow. When one calls him, one should use the best of names. If he has a (special mode of) address,⁸⁴⁹ one should use that which the other likes more.

'Umar (R) said: "The love of thy brother is purified with three things: one is that thou address him by the best of names; that thou give him the salutation first; and that thou give him precedence in seating." These are of the nature of thy praising him in his absence and thy not sitting in the place that he prefers, just as thou extolest his family and children and whatever is his. For this has a great effect in friendship and love. Thou shouldst thank him for every good thing he does for thee.

'Ali (R) says: "Whoever does not thank his own brother for a good intention, does not thank him for a good deed either." In his absence, one must aid him and refute bad allegations about him. One must consider him as one does one's self. It is a great unkindness (to the friend) to be silent when someone is saying bad things about one's friend in one's presence. It is as though one did not come to his aid when one

⁸⁴⁹ That is, if he prefers to be called by his nickname (*kunyah*) or pedigree (*nasab*), for example. See Translator's Preface on the formation of Arab names.

saw someone beating him. The wounds caused by words are even greater.

Someone says: "I never said anything about my friend that I did not suppose I could say in his presence and in his hearing, so I said that which I would have wanted him to hear." Abu Darda⁸⁵⁰ (R) saw two cows tethered in a field. When one stood, the other did. He wept and said: "Brotherhood for the sake of God should be just like that; standing together and walking together in unanimity."

THE FIFTH RIGHT is that one teach him whatever he needs of knowledge or religion, for saving one's brother from the fire of hell takes precedence over the sorrow of the world. If he has learned, but not implemented that, one should counsel him and advise him. One should inspire him to fear God Most High. However, such counsel should be given in private so that it may be a mercy. Counseling in public is shaming him. Say what thou sayest with kindness, not harshly, for the Messenger (S) says: "(One) believer is the mirror of (another) believer." That is, he sees and knows his own defects and shortcomings in another. When thy brother speaks kindly with thee about thy defects in private, thou shouldst feel gratitude and not become angry. It is as though someone tells thee: "There is a snake or a scorpion in thy clothing. Be careful!" Thou wouldst not become angry for this, and thou wouldst express thy gratitude. All of the bad qualities in thee are like snakes and scorpions, but they will bite thee in the grave and the wounds will be on thy soul. That will be harder than the snakes and scorpions of this world, for their wounds are on the body.

'Umar (R) used to say: "God have mercy on that which brings my defects before me as a gift." When Salman went to him, ('Umar) said: "O Salman, tell me the truth, what hast thou seen or heard about my activities that has displeased thee?" (Salman) replied: "Please excuse me from talking about this." ('Umar) said: "There certainly is something." After much insistence, (Salman) said: "I heard that on thy dining cloth there were two loaves of bread at one time and that thou possessest two tunics, one for night and the other for the day." ('Umar) said: "There will no longer be a second of these things. Hast thou heard anything else?" (Salman) answered: "No."

Hudhayfah al-Mar'ashi⁸⁵¹ wrote a letter to Yusuf Asbat:⁸⁵² "I have heard that thou hast sold thy religion for two grains in the market to

⁸⁵⁰ Abu Darda: Abū al-Dardā 'Uwaym bin Malik, of the Khazraji Helpers and one of the "People of the Bench" (*ahl-i ṣuffah*) among the Companions of the Prophet. He was an important authority on the Quran and the Traditions. He died AH32/652CE.

⁸⁵¹ Hudhayfah al-Mar'ashi: Hudhayfah bin Qatādah al-Mar'ashī, an ascetic. The incident of his writing to Yusuf Asbat is also recorded in 'Attar's *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'*. He died AH207/822-3CE.

buy something. That person said the price was eight grains.⁸⁵³ And thou saidst: 'Give it to me for six grains.' That person sold it to thee, and that indulgence was because he knew thee for thy religion and righteousness. Take off the veil of negligence from thy head and awaken from thy sleep. Know that I am not sure that whoever has acquired a knowledge of the Quran and then is eager for the world is not among the ridiculers of the verses⁸⁵⁴ of God Most High.

Therefore, the sign of an eagerness for religion is that one be grateful for such things. God Most High says: *But ye love not good advisers.* (Q. 7:79) Among the attributes of liars and whoever does not like the adviser is the haughtiness and pride that overcomes their faith.

All of this is for the situation in which a person does not realize his own defects. If he knows them, one must advise him by allusions and one must not be direct. And if that defect should be some shortcoming with respect to thee, concealing and considering it thoughtlessness is better, on the condition that thy heart does not change with regard to the friendship. If it will alter that friendship, it is better to rebuke him in private than withdrawing (from him); but withdrawal is better than disparagement and censure.

Thine objective in association must be that thou refine thy nature by tolerating the brethren, not that thou have an expectation of some good from them. Abu Bakr Kattani⁸⁵⁵ (R) says: "A man associated with me and my heart was heavy. I gave him something with the intention of relieving my heart of that weight. It was not relieved. I took him by the hand and brought him home and told him to place his foot on my face. He said: 'Of course. Take care!' I said: 'It must certainly be done thus.' He did that and the weight was lifted from my heart."

Abu 'Ali Rubati⁸⁵⁶ says: "I became a companion of Abu 'Abdullah Razi⁸⁵⁷ in the desert. He said: 'Am I to be the commander on this journey or thou?' I said: 'Thou.' He said: 'Thou must obey me in everything I say.' I said: 'I hear and obey.' He said: 'Bring me that sack.'

⁸⁵² Yusuf Asbat: Yūsuf bin Asbāt al-Shaybānī, an ascetic who died about AH195/811 CE.

⁸⁵³ "grains" (*habbah*): A *habbah* was one-eighth of a *dānak*, itself about .45 grams metric; a very small amount. Ghazzali uses *dānak*, which is translated here as "eight grains."

⁸⁵⁴ "the verses" (*āyāt*): or, "the signs."

⁸⁵⁵ Abu Bakr Kattani: Muḥammad bin 'Alī bin Ja'far al-Kattānī, Abū Bakr. An important ascetic and saint of the end of the first Islamic (c. 7th CE) century, mentioned in *Kashf al-Mahjūb* and given a chapter in *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'*, he was called "the lamp of the Sacred Precinct" (*chirāgh-i ḥarām*). He knew Junayd and others.

⁸⁵⁶ Abu 'Ali Rubati (Abū 'Alī Rubāṭī): No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

⁸⁵⁷ Abu 'Abdullah Razi (Abū 'Abdullāh Rāzī): possibly a teacher of Traditions who taught Ibn Bari (d. AH582/1187CE) and Ibn Sa'dun amongst others. Given the date of his pupil Ibn Bari's death, Abu 'Abdullah would be a contemporary of Ghazzali, making this identification doubtful, although possible.

I brought it and he put our provisions, clothing, and whatever else we had into it and threw it over his shoulder. No matter how much I said: 'Give it to me so that thou not become tired.' He said: 'Did I not tell thee that the authority is mine? Be thou obedient.' The next night it rained. He remained on his feet all night holding a *gilim*⁸⁵⁸ over me so that the rain would not fall on me. When I would speak about it, he would say: 'I am the commander. Obey thou me' to the point I said to myself that I wished I had not agreed to make him the commander."

THE SIXTH RIGHT is the forgiveness of errors and shortcomings. The great ones have said: "If a brother commits some shortcoming with respect to thee, ask thyself to make seventy excuses on his behalf. If thyself does not accept this, say to it: 'Thou art the ill-natured and base one, for thy brother has made seventy apologies and thou hast not accepted them!'"

If the shortcoming is of the kind that is counted as a sin against one, counsel him gently so that he may refrain from that. If he does not and insists, then ignore it. If he persists in this stubbornness, counsel him. If that does not avail, the Companions (R) are not of one mind about (what to do next). The school of Abu Dharr (R) holds that one must then cut oneself off from him, for he says: "I loved him for the sake of God Most High. Now I must have enmity with him for the sake of God Most High." But Abu Darda and a number of the Companions (R) have said: "One should not withdraw from him, for there is the hope that he may change. However, one should not form a friendship with such a person in the first place. But when it is done, it should not be cut off quickly." Ibrahim Nakha'i⁸⁵⁹ (R) says: "Do not abandon thy brother for a sin he commits today; tomorrow he may refrain from it." In the Traditions, it is related that the Messenger (S) said: "Avoid the error of the learned one, but do not cut yourselves off from him. Hope that he will return quickly."

There were two brothers from among the great ones of religions. One became afflicted with a fondness for some creature. He said to the other brother: "My soul has become ill. If thou wish to cut the bonds of brotherhood, do so." (The other) said: "God forbid that I break off with thee for one sin." He swore to himself not to eat or drink so long as God Most High did not cure (his brother) of that. He did not eat for forty days and continuously supplicated (God). Then, he asked (his brother): "How are things?" He answered: "The same." He continued to be patient and

⁸⁵⁸ *gilim*: a coarse cloth used as a garment or floor covering made of goat's hair or wool. Today it is more often woven of cotton and used as a floor covering.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibrahim Nakha'i: Ibrāhīm bin Yazīd al-Nakha'i, Abū 'Umrān (or 'Ammār). An important jurisprudent of Iraq, he was noted for his piety and knowledge of the Traditions. He settled in Kufah and died AH95/713-4CE.

endure hunger until his body melted, until that time his brother came and said: "God Most High has accomplished (it) and the passion in my heart has turned to coldness." The other resumed eating and drinking.

Someone was asked: "Thy brother has turned aside from the way of religion and has fallen into sin. Why dost thou not break with him?" He answered: "He is in need of a brother today for he has stumbled. How can I withhold my hand from him? Indeed, I should take his hand so that I may deliver him from hell with kindness."

Among the Children of Israel, two friends were worshipping at the summit of a mountain. One came to the city in order to buy something, and his eye fell upon a prostitute. He fell madly in love with her and became helpless. He stayed together with her. After several days had passed, the other came in search of his friend and learned what had happened to him. He went to him. The man, out of shame, said: "I know thee not." The other said: "O brother, do not upset thyself, for I have never felt the compassion and love for thee that I now feel." He placed his hand on (his brother's) neck and kissed him repeatedly. When the (sinner) saw his compassion, he knew that he had not lost his regard. He rose up and repented, and they departed together.

So, the way of Abu Dharr is closer to soundness. However, the (way of Abu Darda) is gentler and more learned, a way (that leads) to his repentance. How can he be abandoned on the day of his need for his brethren? As for the aspect of religious law, when the pact of friendship has been made, it is like a blood relationship, and it is not proper that a blood relationship be cut off because of sin. It was for this God Most High said: *And if (thy kinsfolk) disobey thee, say: Lo! I am innocent of what they do.* (Q. 26:216) He said that if thy clan and relatives rebel against thee, Say: "I am free of their deeds." He did not say: "I am free of thee."

Abu Darda (R) was told: "Thy brother has committed a sin. Why art thou not his enemy?" He said: "I am the enemy of his sin, but he is my brother."

However, one should not accept such people as brothers in the first place. Brotherhood is not (just) not betraying one, but severing relations is a betrayal and the omission of a right (of brotherhood) that has been established.

Moreover, it is not a crime that if one commits some shortcoming with respect to thee, forgiveness is to be preferred. If he apologizes—even though thou knowest it to be false—it should be accepted. The Messenger (S) said: "The believer angers quickly and gladdens quickly." Abu Sulayman Darani said to his disciple: "If thou experience some oppression from a friend, do not censure him; for it may be that thou hear a word in the censure that is worse than the lapse." He said: "As I have tested this, that is what I have seen."

THE SEVENTH RIGHT is that thou should remember thy friend in thy supplications (to God), both in (his) lifetime and after (his) death. The same is true for his children and family. Just as thou supplicate for thyself, offer supplications for him; for in truth, that supplication is (also) for thyself. The Messenger (S) says: “(Whenever) someone supplicates for his brother in his absence, an angel says: ‘It is for thee too.’” In another narrative, God Most High says: “I shall begin with thee.” And he said: “The supplication (to God) on behalf of a friend in his absence is not rejected.”

Abu Darda (R) says: “I mention seventy friends by name in the prostration. I supplicate for them all, one by one.” It has been said: “The brother is he who is always mindful of thy heritage after (thy) death in (his) supplications. His heart is occupied (by the thought) about what is God Most High doing with thee.”

The Messenger (S) says: “The dead person is like one who is drowning and his hands are striking out in all directions. He is waiting for the supplications of his children and family and friends (on his behalf). Those supplications of the living reach the graves of the dead like mountains of light.” In the Traditions it is related that: “The supplications (of the living) are displayed to the dead upon trays of light. It is said: ‘This is the gift of such-and-such a person.’ (The dead) are as delighted as are the living at receiving a gift.”

THE EIGHTH RIGHT is to guard one’s faithfulness to friends. This means, first, that thou not neglect the families and children of thy friends after their death. An old woman went to the Messenger (S). He honored her. They were surprised at this. He said: “She came to us during the lifetime of Khadijah and honoring a pledge is a part of belief.”

Another (type of) faithfulness is that one be compassionate with all those attached to the friend: children, apprentices,⁸⁶⁰ and slaves. The effect of that in his soul will be greater than commiserating about him.

Another is that if one receive some rank, pomp, or position of authority, one retain the same humility which one had and not become haughty to one’s friends.

Another faithfulness is that one preserve the friendship continuously and not cut it off for anything, for there is no work for Satan more important than inspiring dissension among the brethren, as God Most High says: *Surely Satan sows dissensions among them.* (Q. 17:53) Joseph⁸⁶¹ (A) said: “*After Satan had sown dissension between me and my brethren.*” (Q. 12:100)

⁸⁶⁰ “apprentices” (apprentice = Per. *shāgird*); or “students.”

⁸⁶¹ Joseph: the Biblical Joseph, the son of Jacob. In Arabic: *Yūsuf*.

Another faithfulness is that one not listen to anyone's impugning with respect to (the friend) and one consider (him) a slanderer.⁸⁶²

Another faithfulness is that one not befriend his enemies; rather, one should consider his enemies to be thine own enemies, for anyone who is someone's friend must be unfriendly to his enemies. If one befriends his enemy, such friendship is weak.

THE NINTH RIGHT is that ceremony be abandoned between you. One should be with his friend as though he were alone. If they regard each with ceremony, that friendship is deficient. The Commander of the Believers 'Ali (R) says: "The worst of friends is he who requires thee to apologize to him and to be ceremonious with him." Junayd (R) said: "I have seen many brothers, but I have never seen two brothers who stand on ceremony with each other but that one of them has some (moral) defect."

It has been said: "Live with the worldly with politeness, with the people of the Hereafter with knowledge, and with those who have spiritual knowledge as thou wishest."

A group of Sufis associated with one another on the condition that if one of them continually fasted or ate bread or spent the night asleep or spent the night in formal prayer, the others would not ask him why he was doing that. In summary, the meaning of friendship for God Most High is oneness. In oneness, there is no ceremony.

THE TENTH RIGHT is that one consider oneself to be lower than all of one's friends. One should not expect anything from them, nor hope for any consideration. One should attend to all of their rights. Someone came to Junayd saying: "Brothers have become scare and unobtainable in these times." He said this several times. Junayd said: "If thou want someone to feed thee and share thy troubles, they are rare. But if thou want someone to feed and share his sorrow, there are many like that with me."

The great ones have said: "Whoever wants to think himself superior to his friends is sinful and they will become sinful with respect to him. If he thinks himself the same as they, both he and they will be unhappy. If he think himself below them, he will be at ease and sound, both he and they." Abu Mu'awiyah al-Aswad⁸⁶³ said: "My friends are all better than I, for they give me precedence over themselves and consider me more learned."

⁸⁶² This "faithfulness" is not found in AA's text.

⁸⁶³ Abu Mu'awiyah al-Aswad: Abū Mu'āwiyah al-Yamān al Aswad, an ascetic with connections to Tarsus and Basrah.

PART THREE: CONCERNING THE RIGHTS OF MUSLIMS, NEIGHBORS, RELATIVES, AND SLAVES

Know that the rights of each person are according to his nearness and there are degrees of nearness. Rights are according to the amount of those. The strongest tie is that of the brother for the sake of God whose rights have been discussed above. However, for the person with whom there is no friendship, but there is the relationship of Islam, there are also rights.

[THE RIGHTS OF MUSLIMS]

THE FIRST RIGHT is that one not like for another Muslim that which one does not like for himself. The Messenger (S) says: "The similitude of the Muslims is that they are like one body. When one part is troubled, all parts are made aware of that and are troubled." And he said: "Whoever desires to achieve freedom from hell when death finds him, it must find him upon the word of the Testimony of Faith,⁸⁶⁴ and whatever he does not like done to him, he does not do to any other Muslim." Moses (A) said: "O Lord, who is more just among Thy servants?" (God) said: "The one who gives justice from himself."

THE SECOND RIGHT is that no Muslim be troubled by one's deeds or speech. The Messenger (S) asked: "Do ye know who is a Muslim?" They answered: "God and His Messenger know best." He said: "That person from whose hand and tongue the Muslims are at ease." They asked: "Who is a believer?" He said: "He with whom the Muslims are secure in their own bodies and property." They asked: "Then who is an emigrant?" He said: "That person who has left off bad deeds." And he said: "It is not lawful that a person trouble a single Muslim with a single glance. It is not lawful that one do something which worries or frightens a Muslim."

Mujahid (R) says: "God Most High throws itches and scabs upon the inhabitants of hell; they scratch until the bones appear. Then a herald calls:⁸⁶⁵ 'What is that misery like?' They say: 'It is severe.' (The herald) says: 'This is for the pain ye caused the Muslims in the world.'" The Messenger (S) said: "I saw someone in going about heaven as he wished because he had cut down a tree that was in the path of Muslims, so that no one would be bothered by it."

⁸⁶⁴ "Testimony of Faith": *Al-Shahādah*.

⁸⁶⁵ "a herald calls": following AA. HK has a plural, which would probably put the phrase into passive voice "it is called out (to them)."

THE THIRD RIGHT is that one not be arrogant with anyone, for God Most High holds the arrogant in enmity. The Messenger (S) said: "He revealed to me: 'Be humble so as not to be prideful with any person.'" It was for this that the Messenger (S) went to the widows and the poor to see to their needs. No one should look at another scornfully. It may be that the person is a friend of God Most High⁸⁶⁶ and (the scorner) not know it, for God Most High conceals His saints so that no one may approach them.

THE FOURTH RIGHT is that one not listen to the words of any calumniator about any Muslim, for one must listen to the speech of the just, and the calumniator is a sinner. As it is related in the Traditions: "No calumniator will enter heaven." One must know that anyone who tells tales about another to thee, tells tales about thee to others. One must keep one's distance from him and consider him a liar.

THE FIFTH RIGHT is that one should not cut off talking with any acquaintance for more than three days. The Messenger (S) says: "It is not lawful to cut off conversation with a brother Muslim for more than three days." The best of them is the one offers a greeting first.

'Ikramah (R) says: "God Most High said to Joseph (A): 'I have made thy rank and name great because thou didst forgive thy brothers.'" In the Traditions, it is related: "Every bad thing thou sufferest from a brother increases nothing other than (thy) own stature."

THE SIXTH RIGHT is that one do good to everyone as much as one is able. One should not make a distinction between good and bad (persons), for it is related in the Traditions: "Do good with everyone thou art able to. If that person is not of that disposition, thou shouldst be so." In the Traditions, it is related: "The basis of intelligence, after faith, is showing friendship to people and doing good deeds to the chaste and the unchaste." Abu Hurayrah (R) says: "Whoever took the hand of the Messenger (S) to speak with him, he did not let go of it until other did. He would turn to whoever spoke with him and be patient until that person had finished speaking."

THE SEVENTH RIGHT is that one respect the elderly and have compassion for children, for the Messenger (S) says: "Whoever does not respect the aged and does not have compassion for children is not of us." And he said: "Honoring white hair is honoring God Most High." And he said: "No young person has shown respect for an elder but that God Most High has not prompted a youth to respect him during his time of old

⁸⁶⁶ "a friend of God Most High" (*wali-yi haqq-ta'alā*): that is, a saint.

age.” This is the good news of a long life for whoever attains the good fortune of honoring the elders. It is the proof that he will reach old age to see its reward.

When the Messenger (S) returned from a journey, the children would be brought out to greet him. He would place a couple of them in front of himself on the animal he was riding and others behind him. They would brag to each other: “The Messenger (S) set me in front of himself and thee behind.” When they brought infants to him so that he might name them and supplicate God (for them), he would take them beside him, and it would (sometime) happen that the infant would urinate. (The parents) would cry out and make to take the child from him, but he would say: “Let him finish; do not stop him.” Then he would not wash himself in front of the parent so as not make them feel bad. He would wash after they had left. If the boy were small, he would sprinkle water (on the spot) and not wash it.⁸⁶⁷

THE EIGHTH RIGHT is that one be pleasant and candid with all Muslims and have a smiling face for all. The Messenger (S) said: “God Most High loves the pleasant and the courteous.” And he said: “A good deed which results in forgiveness is very easy: (having) a pleasant countenance and a pleasant tongue.”

Anas Malik (R) says: “A helpless woman came to the Messenger (S) while he was walking and said: ‘I have some business with thee.’ He said: ‘Take a seat wherever thou wantest in this lane so that I may sit with thee.’ Then she went to the lane opposite and sat until she had said all (to him).”

THE NINTH RIGHT is that no promise to a Muslim should go unfulfilled. In the Traditions, it is related: “There are three things in every hypocrite, even though he performs the obligatory formal prayers and keeps the fast: lying when speaking, breaking promises, and betraying trust.”

THE TENTH RIGHT is that one should reverence a person according to his degree. Whoever is dearer, one should hold him dearer amongst people. It may be that as he has fine clothing, a horse, and retinue, one know by that that he is more revered.

‘Ayishah (R) was on a journey. They spread the dining cloth. A poor man passed by. She said: “Give him a loaf of bread.” A rider passed by. She said: “Call him.” They said: “Thou didst let the poor man pass on and invite the rich man?” She said: “God Most High has given every person a degree. We too must observe the rights of that degree. The poor

⁸⁶⁷ This last sentence is not found in AA's text.

man was made happy with a loaf, but it would be unseemly to do the same with an important person. We must do that which will make him happy."

In the Traditions, it is related: "When the cherished one of a people comes to you, honor him." There was a person to whom the Messenger (S) gave his own cloak for him to sit upon. An old woman who had given him milk came to him and he sat her upon his own cloak and said to her: "Welcome, Mother! Do me a kindness and ask of me what thou wilt so that I may give it to thee." Then, he presented her with a portion of the war-booty that had come to him. She sold it to 'Uthman (R) for 100,000 dirhams.

THE ELEVENTH RIGHT is that one try to make peace between any two Muslims who are angry with each other, for the Messenger (S) said: "Shall I tell you that which is more meritorious than formal prayer, fasting, and giving voluntary charity?" They said: "Tell us." He said: "Making peace among the Muslims."

Anas (R) says: "One day the Messenger (S) was sitting and laughing. 'Umar (R) said: 'May my father and mother be thy sacrifice! What art thou laughing about?' He said: 'Two men of my nation are kneeling before the Lord of Glory at the Resurrection asking for judgment between them. One says: "O Lord God! He has done me a wrong. Take my right from him." God Most High says: "Give him his due." (The other) says: "O Lord God! All of my good deeds have been carried away by my adversaries. I have nothing left." God Most High says to the injured party: "Now what should he do? He has no good deed to give thee." He says: "O Lord God! Transfer my sins to him." So his sins were placed upon the other, but there were still sins left.' At that point the Messenger (S) broke into tears and said: 'That is a tremendous day on which everyone will have need to have his burden taken from him.'

"Then, God Most High says to the injured man: "Look up! What dost thou see?" He says: "O Lord, I see cities of silver and I see palaces of gold adorned with precious stones and pearls." (The man) continues: "For which Messenger (of God), righteous person, or martyr can they be?" God Most High says: "One buys them and gives the price." He asked: "O Lord, who can pay the price for that?" (God) says: "Thou!" He says: "O Lord God, with what?" (God) says "With thy forgiveness of this brother." He says: "O Lord God, I forgive him." (God) says: "Arise! Take his hand and enter Paradise, both of you together!"

"Then the Messenger (S) said: 'Fear God Most High and make peace amongst Muslims.'"

THE TWELFTH RIGHT is that one should conceal the defects and the private affairs of Muslims, for it is related in the Traditions: "Anyone

who holds a veil over a Muslim in this world, God Most High holds a veil over his sins at the Resurrection."

Abu Bakr Siddiq (R) says: "Whomever I arrest, whether a thief or a wine-drinker, I desire God Most High to cloak that sin from him."

The Messenger (S) said: "O ye who have come to faith, but that faith has not yet entered your hearts, do not talk evil behind people's backs and do not investigate their private affairs. Whoever exposes the private affairs of a Muslim, God Most High makes his private affairs turn into his disgrace, even if it is inside a house."

Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "I remember that the first person caught for theft was brought to the Messenger (S) so that his hand be cut off. The Messenger's (S) face paled. They said: 'O Messenger of God, does this business displease thee?' He said: 'Why should it not? Why should I be Satan's helper in the enmity of my brethren? If ye want God Most High to forgive and conceal your sins, ye too conceal the sin of your Muslim brother, for when it reaches the ruler there is no remedy except the execution of the proscribed punishment.'"

'Umar Khattab (R) was on patrol one night. He heard singing. He went up on the roof and entered that house. When he went down, he saw a man, a woman sitting with him, and wine. He said: "O enemy of God, didst thou suppose that God Most High would conceal such a sin for thee?" He replied: "O Commander of the Believers, do not reprove me, for if I have committed one sin, thou hast committed three. God Most High says to thee: *And do not spy*, (Q. 49:12) and thou hast spied; and He has said: *And go to houses by the gates thereof*, (Q. 2:189) and thou camest in from the roof; and He said: *Enter not houses other than your own without first announcing your presence and invoking peace upon the folk thereof*. (Q. 24:28) He has said: "Do not go without permission into anyone's house, and greet them." Thou didst enter without permission and did not greet me." 'Umar (R) said: "If I forgive thee, wilt thou repent?" He replied: "I shall, if thou forgivest me, I shall never return to this." So 'Umar forgave him and he repented.

The Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection molten lead will be poured into the ears of whoever turns his ear to listen to the conversation of people not being addressed to him."

THE THIRTEENTH RIGHT is that one keep away from accusations so that the hearts of the Muslims may be protected from suspicion and their tongues from talebearing. For, whoever becomes the cause of the sin of another is a partner in that sin. The Messenger (S) says: "How can it be that a person curse his own mother and father?" They said: "Who does that, O Messenger of God?" He said: "Whoever curses the mother and father of another so that they are prompted to curse thy mother and father. That curse has (in reality) been given by him."

'Umar Khattab (R) says: "Whoever stands at a place of accusation has no (right) to blame the person who has a bad opinion about him."

The Messenger (S) was in the mosque talking with Safiyah at the end of Ramadan. Two men passed by him. He called them and said: "This is my wife, Safiyah." They said: "O Messenger of God, even if people will be suspicious of a person, they will not be suspicious of thee." He said: "Satan moves in the body of a person as blood does in the veins."⁸⁶⁸

'Umar (R) saw a man who was talking with a woman on the road. He beat him with a scourge. The man said: "This my own wife!" 'Umar said: "Why dost thou not talk with her in a good place where no one sees?"

THE FOURTEENTH RIGHT is that if someone has an office, he should not refuse any just due of any person. The Messenger (S) said to the Companions: "Request something from me, for I feel in my heart that I want to give. I shall delay until one of you intercedes so that he have the reward. Intercede so that ye may obtain spiritual reward." And he said: "There is no voluntary charity more meritorious than the charity of the tongue." They asked: "How is that?" He said: "The intercession by which an (accused) murderer remains innocent, or someone benefits, or some trouble is lifted from a person."

THE FIFTEENTH RIGHT is that when one hears someone censure a Muslim and harbors designs against his life, or his property, in his absence. One should be the helper of that absentee in reply and the prevention of those injustices to him. The Messenger (S) says: "There is no Muslim who aids another Muslim when they are saying ugly things about him and disrespecting him that God Most High does not aid him when he is more needful. There is no Muslim who omits aid and does not offer opposition (to the injustice to another Muslim) to whom God Most High does not give a loss in a place which he loves more."

THE SIXTEENTH RIGHT is that when one is afflicted with the company of a bad person, one should be courteous and civil until one can be free of him. One should not be harsh with him face to face. Ibn 'Abbas (R) says in the interpretation of the verse '*and they repel evil with good*' (Q. 13:22) that ye should meet curses with "peace" and civility.

⁸⁶⁸ The Prophet called the men and told them that Safiyah was his wife lest they think, even though they knew him to be the Messenger of God, that he was having a conversation with a woman not of the prohibited degrees (*nā mahram*).

'Ayishah (R) says: "A man wanted permission to see the Messenger (S). He said: 'Give him permission, for he is a bad man among his own people.' When he came, (the Messenger) was so considerate and polite to him that I thought that he had some honor for him. When he left, I said: 'Thou saidst that he was a bad man, but thou wert very considerate with him.' He replied: 'O 'Ayishah, the worst of men to God Most High at the Resurrection is the person who is shown consideration out of fear of his evil.'"

It is related in the Traditions that: "That by which thou retainest thine own honor from the tongue of a detractor is voluntary charity." Abu Darda (R) says: "There are many people at whom we smile but whom we curse in our hearts."

THE SEVENTEENTH RIGHT is that one have association and friendship with the poor and avoid sitting with the powerful. The Messenger (S) said: "Do not sit with the dead." They asked him: "Who are they?" He replied: "The powerful."

Wherever Solomon (A) saw a poor and humble person in his kingdom, he would sit with him and say: "A poor and humble person is sitting with a poor and humble person." Jesus (A) preferred to be addressed: "O poor and humble one!" more than by any other name.

Our Messenger (S) said: "O Lord God! As long as Thou keepest me alive, keep me poor and humble. When Thou causest me to die, cause me to die poor and humble. When Thou gatherest me, gather me with the poor and humble." Moses (R) said: "O Lord God! Where should I seek Thee?" He answered: "With the broken-hearted."

THE EIGHTEENTH RIGHT is that one should endeavor to gladden the heart of a Muslim and provide for his needs. The Messenger (S) says: "For whoever takes care of the need of a Muslim, it is as though he has served God Most High for all his life." And he said: "At the Resurrection, God Most High brightens the eye of whoever brightens the eye of believer." And he said: "Going to attend to the need of a Muslim for an hour, day or night, whether the need be met or not, it is better for one than sitting in seclusion in a mosque for two months." And he said: "God Most High bestows seventy-three forgivenesses upon whoever gives comfort to the sad or delivers an oppressed person." And he said: "Aid thy brother, whether he is an oppressor or oppressed." They asked: "How should we aid an oppressor?" He replied: "God Most High does not love any act of obedience more than gladdening the heart of a Muslim." And he said: "There are two qualities which no act of worship surpasses: accepting the faith and seeking the satisfaction of people." And he said: "Whoever has no concern for the Muslims is not one of them."

Fudayl (R) was seen weeping. He was asked: "For what art thou weeping?" He replied: "Because of the distress I feel for the wretched Muslim who did me an injustice. What will happen to him tomorrow when he is questioned at the Resurrection? He will be disgraced and will have no excuse or argument."

Ma'ruf Karkhi⁸⁶⁹ (R) says: "The name of whoever repeats three times '*O God, correct the people of Muhammad! O God, have mercy upon the people of Muhammad; O God, comfort the people of Muhammad,*' will be recorded among the saints."⁸⁷⁰

THE NINETEENTH RIGHT is that one greet whomever one meets with "Peace" (*salām*) before conversing with him and that one take his hand. The Messenger (S) said: "Do not reply to whoever opens conversation before greeting with 'Peace' until he does that first." A person went to the Messenger (S) and did not greet him with 'Peace.' He told him: "Go out and re-enter and greet with 'Peace.'"

Anas (R) says: "After I had served the Messenger for eight years, he said: 'Anas, make thorough ablutions so that thy life may be long; greet whomever thou meetest with "Peace" so that thy good deeds may be many; and when thou enterest a house, greet its inhabitants with "Peace" so that there be much goodness in thine own house.'"

A person came to the Messenger (S) and said: "*Peace be upon you.*" He said: "They are recording ten good deeds for him." Another entered and said: "*Peace be upon you and the mercy of God.*" And he said: "They are recording twenty good deeds for him." Another entered and said: "*Peace be upon you and the mercy of God and His blessings.*" And he said: "They are recording thirty good deeds for him."

And the Messenger (S) said: "When ye enter some place, say 'Peace.' When ye leave, also say 'Peace.' The first is not more important than the last." And he said: "When two Muslims take each other's hands, seventy mercies are divided between them: sixty-nine for the person who smiles more and is more pleasant. When two Muslims meet and exchange the greeting of 'Peace,' one hundred mercies are divided between them: ninety for him who greeted first and ten for him who replied."

⁸⁶⁹ Ma'ruf Karkhi: Ma'rūf bin Firūz al-Karkhī, Abū Mahfūz. He was born near Wasit in central Iraq, his parents were Christians. He converted to Islam and became a famous mystic, living in the Karkh quarter of Baghdad; hence his sobriquet. He died AH200/815-16CE.

⁸⁷⁰ "saints": *abdāl*, literally, "substitutes." The seventy righteous persons by whom God Most High sustains the existence of the world.

Kissing the hands of the great ones of religion is a practice of the Prophet. Abu 'Ubaydah Jarrah⁸⁷¹ kissed the hand of 'Umar Khattab. Anas (R) says: "I asked the Messenger (S): 'When we meet each other, should we bow?' He said: 'No.' I said: 'Should we shake hands?' He said: 'Yes.'"

As for kissing the cheek and embracing upon the return from a journey, they are practices of the Prophet. However, the Messenger (S) disliked the rising to one's feet (when some one comes). Anas (R) says: "I never loved any person more than (the Prophet), and I did not rise to my feet for him, as I knew he disliked that."

So, if someone shows respect to another on the road—a place where this has become the custom—there is nothing to fear. However, rising to one's feet in front of someone is interdicted. The Messenger (S) said: "Say to whoever likes people to stand before him while he is seated, 'Take thy proper place in hell.'"

THE TWENTIETH RIGHT is that when some one sneezes one should say: "*Praise be to God!*" Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "The Messenger (S) taught us that when someone sneezes one should say: '*Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds!*' After saying this, the person hearing it says: '*May God have mercy upon thee,*' or: '*May thy Lord have mercy upon thee.*' And when this has been said, the other says: '*May God forgive me and you.*' And if a person does not say: '*Praise be to God!*' he does not merit the '*May God have mercy upon thee.*'"

When the Messenger (S) was about to sneeze, he would keep the sound down and cover his mouth with his hand. If a person sneezes in the lavatory, he must say: "*Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds*" to himself.⁸⁷² Ibrahim Nakha'i said: "Should ye say it (aloud), there is no fear (that it would be a sin)."

Ka'b Ahbar says that Moses (A) said: "O Lord, art Thou close so that I should whisper, or art Thou distant so that I should call out?" He said: "Wherever thou rememberest me, I am beside thee." (Moses) said: "O Lord God, we have states such as impurity and elimination, should we remember Thee in such situations?" He answered: "In whatever state thou art, remember Me and fear not."

THE TWENTY-FIRST RIGHT is that one should visit the sick among one's acquaintances, even if he is not a friend. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever visits a sick person will sit in the middle of Paradise. When he

⁸⁷¹ Abu 'Ubaydah Jarrah: Abū 'Ubaydah bin Jarrāh, 'Āmir bin 'Abdullāh. An early convert to Islam and a Companion of the Prophet, he was the governor of Syria during the caliphate of 'Umar bin Khattab. He died AH18/639CE.

⁸⁷² That is: not audibly.

returns (from the visit), 70,000 angels are charged to send him blessings until nightfall."

It is a practice of the Prophet to put one's hand on the hand of the ailing person, or upon his forehead, and to ask him how he feels and to say: "*In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate. I place thee under the protection of God, the One, the Eternal, Who does not beget nor is He begotten and for Whom there is none comparable to Him, from the evil that afflicts thee.*" 'Uthman (R) said: "I was sick. The Messenger (S) came and said that to me several times."

It is the practice for the sick person to say: "*I seek refuge with the might of God and His power from the evil which afflicts me and I am on my guard.*" When someone asks him how he is, he should not be complaining.

In the Traditions, it is related that when a servant (of God) becomes ill, God Most High appoints two angels over him so that when someone comes to visit him, (an angel) thanks him, and if (the sick person) complains, (an angel) says: "It will be well, *praise be to God, Lord of the worlds.*" God Most High says: "I am responsible for My servant. If I take him, I shall take him to My mercy and transport him to Paradise. If I restore his health, I shall make this illness an atonement for his sins and grant him flesh and blood better than what he had before."

'Ali, may God ennoble his visage, says: "Whoever has a stomach ache should ask for something from his own wife's dower portion⁸⁷³ and buy some honey with that. He should mix it with rainwater and he will get well, for God Most High has called rain blessed, honey a remedy, and the dower given to women *wholesome and salubrious*, that is, sweet and easy of digestion, so that when all three things come together, a cure is certain.

In summary, the rules of conduct for the sick person are that he not complain and be anxious. He should hope that his illness shall atone for his sins. When he takes medicine, he should put his trust in the Creator, not in the medicine. And the etiquette for the visitor, it is that he not stay overlong and not ask many questions. He should supplicate God for (the sick person's) restored health. He should show that he is unhappy because of the illness, and refrain from looking at the rooms and doors in (the sick person's) house. When he arrives at the door of the house, he should seek permission (to enter) and not stand around in front of it. Instead, he should stand to one side and knock on the door gently. He should not shout: "Boy!" And if he is asked who he is, he should not reply: "It is I." Instead of that, he should say: "*Glory be to God and praise be to God!*" Whoever knocks at the (sick person's) door should do likewise.

⁸⁷³ "dower portion" (*kābīn*): see Notes 703 and 1380.

THE TWENTY-SECOND RIGHT is that one should follow a corpse (to the grave). The Messenger (S) says: "For whoever follows a corpse there is a carat⁸⁷⁴ of reward. If he stands while they shroud him, two carats. Each carat is several times the size of Mount Uhud."⁸⁷⁵

As for the etiquette of accompanying a bier (to the graveside), one should remain silent, not laugh, and occupy oneself with the lesson (of dying) and reflect upon one's own death. A'mash⁸⁷⁶ says: "I was walking behind a funeral bier not knowing who I was mourning; for each one was more sorrowful than the other." Some people were grieving over a corpse. One of the elders said: "Grieve for yourselves, for he has put three terrors behind him: he has seen the appearance of the Angel of Death, he has experienced the bitterness of giving up his life, and has passed beyond the fear of the end."

The Messenger (S) said: "Three things follow a corpse: family, property, and deeds. The family and property return, but his deeds remain with him."

THE TWENTY-THIRD right is that one should visit graves and supplicate for (the dead) and take a lesson from them. One should know that they have preceded one and that one must also soon go. One's place will be like their graves. Sufyan Thawri (R) says: "Whoever remembers the graves often will find his own grave a garden from among the gardens of Paradise. Whoever forgets them will find a cavern of the caverns of hell."

Rabi Khuthaym, whose grave is at Tus,⁸⁷⁷ was a great one of the Followers.⁸⁷⁸ He had dug a grave in his own house. Whenever he was displeased with himself, he would sleep in that grave and stay there for some time. Then he would say: "O Lord, sent me (back) to the world so that I make up for my shortcomings." Then he would rise up and say: "Behold, O Rabi! He has returned thee! Try to make it so that He does not have to return thee more than one time!"

'Umar (R) with him, says that the Messenger (S) went to a cemetery and sat at the head of a grave weeping copiously. "When I came nearer to him, I said: 'Why art thou weeping, O Messenger of

⁸⁷⁴ "carat" (*qirāt*): a weight equal to half a *dānag* or four grains. Here, it is not being used literally.

⁸⁷⁵ Mount Uhud: A hill near Madinah famous for a victory gained there over the Quraysh in AH3.

⁸⁷⁶ A'mash: Abū Muḥammad Sulaymān bin Miḥrān al-A'mash, a famous scholar of Kufah. He died AH148/765.

⁸⁷⁷ Tus (*Tūs*): Once a great city of Khorasan, now a suburb of Mashhad in northeastern Iran. Ghazzali is buried there.

⁸⁷⁸ Rabi Khuthaym, or Khaytham: An early ascetic. That Ghazzali calls him one of the Followers (*tābi'in*), one of the generation following the Companions, places him perhaps in the second half of the 1st Islamic (7th CE) century.

God?" He said: "This is the grave of my mother. I sought permission from God Most High to visit (her grave) and ask for her forgiveness. He gave me permission for the visit, but not for the supplication. Filial compassion welled up in my heart and I wept for her."

This is a summary of the rights of Muslims that should be observed only for Muslims.

[THE RIGHTS OF NEIGHBORS]

As for the rights of neighbors, there are many. The Messenger (S) said: "There is a neighbor who has one right: he is an unbeliever. There is the neighbor who has two rights: he is a Muslim. There is the neighbor who has three rights: he is a Muslim relative." And he said: "Gabriel (A) has always counseled me about the rights of neighbors, to the point that I supposed they would inherit from me." And he said: "Say to whoever believes in God and the Day of Resurrection: 'Hold thy neighbor dear.'" And he said: "A person is not a Muslim whose neighbor suffers from him or is not safe from him." And he said: "The first of two judgments at the Resurrection shall be with the neighbor." And he said: "Whoever throws a stone at his neighbor's dog gives offense to him."

The Messenger (S) was told: "Such-and-such a woman fasts by day and spends her nights in formal prayer, but she annoys her neighbor." He said: "Her place is in hell." And he said: "Thy neighbors are those to the fortieth house."⁸⁷⁹ Zuhri⁸⁸⁰ (R) says: "Forty houses to the right, forty houses to the left, forty houses to the front, and forty houses to the rear."

Know that a neighbor's right is not only that thou not trouble him, but that thou must also do good to him. It is related in the Traditions: "At the Resurrection, the poor neighbor shall contend with the rich man, saying: 'O Lord God! Ask him why he did no good deed for me and why he closed the door of his mansion against me?'"

One of the saints was bothered by a multitude of mice. He was asked: "Why dost thou not have a cat?" He said: "I fear that mice will hear his meowing and flee to my neighbor's house. How can I like for my neighbor that which I dislike for myself?"

The Messenger (S) said: "Dost thou know what the right of the neighbor is? It is that if he asks thee for help, thou helpest him. If he wants a loan, thou givest it to him. If he is poor, thou aidest him. If he is sick, thou visitest him. If he dies, thou followest his bier (to the grave). If some pleasing thing comes to him, thou congratulatest him. If he is

⁸⁷⁹ That is, to the distance of the fortieth house from one's own house.

⁸⁸⁰ Zuhri: Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri. An important narrator of Traditions of the second generation, the Followers. He was born in Madinah and lived in Syria. He died AH124/742CE.

touched by some sorrow, thou commiseratest with him. Do not build the wall of thy compound high so that it blocks the way of the breeze and the sun against him. When eating fruit, send him some. If thou cannot, then eat in seclusion. Thou should not approve of thy child taking (some food) in his hand and going outside so that (thy neighbor's) children see what he has in his hand. Thou dost not trouble him with the smoke from thy kitchen except when thou sendest him some of the food thou hast prepared." And he said: "Dost thou know what the right of the neighbor is? By that God in Whose Hand of Power and Command is the life of Muhammad, one does not do justice to rights of neighbors except that person upon whom God Most High has had mercy."

Know that among his rights, one is that thou dost not look down into his house from thy rooftop. If he puts one end of a beam against thy wall, do not forbid him. Thou should not block the way of his waterspouts. If he throws some dirt in front of the door of thy house, do not do battle with him. Whatever thou learnest about his private affairs,⁸⁸¹ thou must keep to thyself and not whisper about him. Thou shouldst keep thine eyes off the women of his household. Thou shouldst not let thy gaze linger on his slave girl. All of this is over and above the rights with respect to Muslims that we have (already) said must be observed.

Abu Dharr Ghaffari (R) says: "My friend the Messenger (S) advised me: 'When thou art cooking, add some water and send some of it to thy neighbor.'"

Someone asked 'Abdullah Mubarak (R): "My neighbor complains about my young male slave. If I beat him without proof, I shall become a sinner. If I do not beat him, my neighbor will be upset. What should I do?" He said: "Wait until thy slave does something stupid deserving punishment. Delay that punishment until thy neighbor complains again, then punish (the slave) so that thou will have observe the rights of both at the same time."

THE RIGHTS OF RELATIVES

Know that the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High says: 'I am Compassionate and a relative is kin. I have derived their name from My Own Name.'⁸⁸² I am joined to whoever is joined to his folk; I am cut off

⁸⁸¹ "private affairs" (*'awrāt*): The word could refer to his women, private parts, or deficiencies. As used in Persian, the most common meaning is the private parts and women, and in Arabic, the private parts or weakness. The Arabic root *'-w-r* implies defectiveness and alternation.

⁸⁸² A play on words. In Arabic, the root for "mercy" is *r-h-m*. *Rahmān* is an intensive form meaning being compassionate, merciful. *Rahīm* or *riḥm*, from the same root means

from whoever cuts himself off from them." And he said: "To whosoever wishes to lengthen his life and to expand his sustenance, say: 'Do good by thy relatives.'" And he said: "There is no act of devotion (to God) with more spiritual reward than (honoring) the bond of kinship, even if they are of a house engaging in sin and corruption, but by observing this kinship, their property increases from that (connection) in its blessedness." And he said: "There is no voluntary charity more meritorious than that which thou givest to relatives who are inimical to thee."

Know that the connection of kinship is that when they cut themselves off from thee, thou adherest to them. The Messenger (S) said: "The best of all the virtues is that thou adhere to whoever cuts himself off from thee, that thou give to whoever deprives thee, and that thou pardon whoever does some injustice to thee."

THE RIGHTS OF MOTHERS AND FATHERS

Know that their rights are greater because they are nearer. The Messenger (S) said: "No person has done justice to the rights of a father until he is like a slave: (the father) buys (him) and sets (him) free." And he said: "Doing good to one's mother and father is superior to formal prayer, fasting, the Greater Pilgrimage, the Lesser Pilgrimage, and fighting in a religious war." And he said: "He smells the fragrance of Paradise from the distance of a journey of five hundred years who is not cursed by his parents or cut off from kinship."

God Most High revealed to Moses (A): "I shall record whoever obeys his mother and father as obedient. I shall record whoever obeys Me and does not obey them as disobedient."

Said the Messenger (S): "What loss is there if a person gives voluntary charity as payment for his dead parents so that they will have the reward and nothing will be lost from his reward?" Someone came to the Messenger (S) and said: "I have a dead mother and father. What obligations remain upon me that I should perform for them?" He said: "Perform formal prayers on their behalf and seek forgiveness and execute their testament. Hold their friends dear and be good to their relatives." And he said: "The rights of a mother are twice those of a father."

"uterus, womb." One of the highest degrees of kinships is being born from the same womb. In this sense, it has acquired the more general meaning of relationship, kinship.

THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Know that someone asked the Messenger (S): "To whom should I do good?" He said: "Thy mother and father." (The man) said: "They are dead." (The Messenger) said: "Thy children, for just as a father has rights, so does a child."

One of the rights of a child is that one not let him be rebellious by his own ill-nature. The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will have mercy on the father who restrains his son's disobedience."

Anas (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "Cut the hair of a boy when he is seven days old and give him a good name and clean him. When he is six years old, ye train him. When he is seven years old, ye command him to perform the formal prayers. When he is nine years old, ye separate his night clothes. When he is ten years old, ye discipline him for (missing) a formal prayer. When he is sixteen years old, his father should give him a wife, take his hand, and say: 'I have corrected thee, I have taught thee to read the Quran; I have given thee a wife; I take refuge with God Most High from thy trouble in the world and from thy torment in the Hereafter.'"⁸⁸³

One of the rights of children is that they be treated equally with regard to gifts and affection. It is the Practice of the Prophet to caress and kiss small children. The Messenger (S) used to kiss Hasan. Aqra' bin Habis⁸⁸⁴ said: "I have ten children. I have never given any one of them a kiss." The Messenger said: "Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy."

The Messenger (S) was on the pulpit when Hasan fell on his face. At once, he ran down from the pulpit, took him in his arms, and recited this verse: "*Your wealth and your children are a temptation.*" (Q. 64:15)

Once the Messenger (S) was performing a formal prayer. When he knelt for the prostration, Husayn put his foot on (the Prophet's) neck. The Messenger (S) delayed so long that the Companions thought that perhaps he was receiving a revelation in which the long prostration was necessary. When he returned the salutation (at the end of the prayer), they asked: "Wast thou receiving a revelation that thou prolongedst the prostration so long?" He replied: "No! No! Husayn had turned me into his camel. I did not want to interrupt him."

⁸⁸³ This passage means that the father has done what he could and from the age of 16 onwards, the child is a man and responsible for his actions.

⁸⁸⁴ Aqra' bin Habis (Aqra' bin Hābis): A member of the tribe of the Banu Tamim, he embraced Islam in the Year of Delegations when the Hassan bin Thabit (see Note 1119), the poet of the Prophet, defeated their orators in a poetry contest. He was a Companion of the Prophet and was killed in Khorasan AH31/651CE.

To summarize, the rights of the parents are stronger than the rights of children, for honoring (the parents) is incumbent upon children. God Most High has made that the equal of worshipping Him, and has said: *Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none save Him, and that ye do good to parents.* (Q. 17:23) From the greatness of (the parents') rights, there are two things obligatory upon (children): One is that a majority of the religious scholars hold the opinion that if there is a food which is doubtful—but not definitely unlawful—and their parents command them to eat of it, they should obey them in that and eat. For, the pleasure (of the parents) is more important than the avoidance of the doubtful. The other is that it is not proper to depart on a journey without their permission, except if it be an absolute individual religious obligation, such as to acquire the knowledge of formal prayer and fasting where there is no one near at hand to instruct them. It is correct that performing the Pilgrimage of Islam is not proper without their permission for, even though it is a religious obligation, delay in (performing) that is allowable.

Someone requested permission from the Messenger (S) to go to join the war in defence of Islam. He said: "Dost thou have a mother?" (The man) said: "I do." (The Messenger) said: "Go and sit beside her, for thy heaven lies beneath her feet."

Another came from Yemen and sought permission to join the war in defence of Islam. (The Messenger) asked: "Dost thou have a mother and father?" He said: "I do." (The Messenger) said: "First seek their permission. If they do not give it, obey them, for after the Unity, thou dost not carry any intimacy to God Most High better than obeying them."

Know that the right of an elder brother approaches that of a father. It is related in the Traditions: "The right of the elder brother over the younger brother is like the right of the father over his children."

THE RIGHTS OF SLAVES

The Messenger (S) said: "Fear God Most High with respect to slaves and those in your power. Give them of the food that ye yourselves eat. Clothe them with what ye clothe yourselves. Do not order them to perform tasks to which their strength is not equal. If they are suitable, keep them; if not, sell them. Do not torment God's creatures, for God Most High has placed the slaves under your control. If He wanted to, He could place you under their control." Someone asked, saying: "O

Messenger of God, how many times should I forgive my slaves (for misbehavior)?" He replied: "Seventy times."⁸⁸⁵

Ahnaf bin Qays⁸⁸⁶ was asked: "From whom didst thou learn brotherhood?" He said: "From Qays 'Asim⁸⁸⁷ whose slave girl was bringing a iron spit from which a roast lamb was hanging when it slipped from her hand and fell upon his infant and killed him. The slave girl fainted from fear and terror. He said to her: 'Be calm. It was not thy fault. I free thee for the sake of God Most High.'"

'Awn bin 'Abdullah⁸⁸⁸ would say whenever his (male) slave disobeyed him: "Hast thou completely adopted the habits of thy master? Just as thy master rebels against his Lord, so thou doest the same (against me)." Abu Mas'ud Ansari⁸⁸⁹ had a (male) slave whom he used to beat. He heard a voice, someone was saying: "O Abu Mas'ud, leave him alone." He looked about and saw the Messenger (S), who said: "Know that God Most High has more power over thee than thou hast over him."

So, the rights of slaves are that one not stint in their food, eating, and clothing. One should not look upon them with superiority, for they too are human beings. If they make an error, one should think about one's own errors with respect to God Most High. When one's anger is provoked, one should reflect upon the power of God Most High over oneself.

The Messenger (S) has said: "To whoever has someone in his power who takes pains and endures smoke to prepare food for him, and then he withholds (that food) from him, say: "Have him sit and eat." If he does not do this, one should take a morsel and wipe it in ghee and with his own hand place it in (the slave's) mouth, and he should say: 'Eat.'"

⁸⁸⁵ "Seventy times": this and similar numbers frequently invoked for a large sums, such as 'seven' and 'forty,' are not to be taken literally. They are an indication of amount. Cf. Matthew 18:22 in the Bible for a similar use of "seventy."

⁸⁸⁶ Ahnaf bin Qays: *Ahnaf* means "he of the deformed foot." His real name was Sakhr. He influenced his tribe, the Banu Tamim, to embrace Islam. He was a commander in the conquest of Persia and led expeditions as far east as Balkh in modern north-central Afghanistan. He was neutral in the Civil War between the parties of Mu'awiyah and 'Ali and was a strong opponent of the Kharijites and the Shiah. He was very influential in Basrah where he was reportedly a friend of Hasan Basri (see Note 398). He died in AH67/687CE. (Bagley)

⁸⁸⁷ Qays 'Asim: Qays 'Āsim, Abū 'Alī al-Tamīmī. A prince and shrewd leader of the Tamim tribe of northern Arabia in the Age of Ignorance (*al-jāhiliyyah*), he accepted Islam in AH10-11/631CE and died in Basrah AH20/640CE.

⁸⁸⁸ 'Awn bin 'Abdullah: 'Awn bin 'Abdullāh bin 'Utbah bin Mas'ūd. He was one of Abu Hanifah's teachers at Kufah in the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century.

⁸⁸⁹ Abu Mas'ud Ansari (d. AH101-2/720CE): Abū Mas'ūd Anṣārī rebuked Mughirah bin Shu'ba for postponing a prayer.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCERNING THE RULES OF HERMITISM AND WITHDRAWAL FROM MANKIND

Know that the religious scholars are in disagreement about seclusion⁸⁹⁰ and hermitism⁸⁹¹ as to whether this is superior to mixing (with people). The opinions of Sufyan Thawri, Ibrahim Adham, Dawud Tayi,⁸⁹² Fudayl 'Iyad, Sulayman-i Khawass,⁸⁹³ Yusuf Asbat, Hudhayfah Mar'ashi, Bishr Hafi, and many others of the pious and learned (R) is that withdrawing is superior to mixing. But a great number of superficial religious scholars are of the opinion that mixing (with people) is superior. 'Umar (R) says: "Observe your own portion of seclusion." Ibn Sirin says: "Withdrawal (from mankind) is worship."

Someone said to Dawud Tayi (R): "Give me some piece of advice." (Dawud) said: "Fast from the world and do not break that fast until death. Flee mankind as thou wouldst a lion." Hasan Basri (R) says: "When a person is content, he is without need; when he withdraws from mankind, he obtains soundness; when he refrains from envy, his virtue becomes apparent; and when he has endured a meager sustenance, he obtains eternal happiness."

Wuhayb bin al-Ward says: "Wisdom is ten: nine in silence, and the tenth in seclusion." Rabi Khuthaym (R) and Ibrahim Nakha'i (R) have spoken thus: "Acquire knowledge and withdraw from mankind." Malik bin Anas⁸⁹⁴ used to visit the brethren and the sick and accompany biers. Then, one by one, he left these things and became a hermit.

Fudayl ('Iyad) said: "I am much obligated to the person who passes me by and does not greet me and does not visit me when I am ill." Sa'd Waqqas⁸⁹⁵ and Sa'd bin Zayd⁸⁹⁶ (R) were counted among the great Companions and stayed near Madinah at a place called 'Aqiq. They did

⁸⁹⁰ "seclusion": P. *'uzlat giriftan*.

⁸⁹¹ "hermitism": P. *zāwīyah giriftan*.

⁸⁹² Dawud Tayi: Dā'ūd al-Ta'i, Abū Sulaymān bin Nuṣayr. A disciple of Abu Hanifah (see Note 400), he became a jurisprudent and an ascetic. He died AH165/781-2CE.

⁸⁹³ Sulayman-i Khawass: Sulaymān-i Khawāṣṣ Abū Ayyūb, an ascetic. He died AH162/778-9CE.

⁸⁹⁴ Malik bin Anas: Abū 'Abdullāh Mālik bin Anas. The founder of the Malikite School of Law, one of the four great Sunni schools. He was considered the most learned man of his era and had a famous encounter with Harun al-Rashid (rgd. AH170/786CE to AH193/809CE). He lived from AH94/716 to AH179/795CE. He spent his last years in seclusion and the contemplation of God.

⁸⁹⁵ Sa'd Waqqas: Abū Ishāq Sa'd bin Abi Waqqāṣ. One of the early converts to Islam, he became a soldier and a governor. He was buried at Madinah in AH55/675CE. Also known as Malik.

⁸⁹⁶ Sa'd bin Zayd: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

not come for Friday prayers or for any other purpose until they died in that place.

A prince said to Hatim Asamm: "Dost thou need anything?" He said: "Yes." (The prince) said: "Ask." (Hatim) replied: "That thou do not see me and I not see thee." Some one said to Sahl Tustari (R): "I desire that there be association between us." (Sahl) said: "When one of his dies, with whom will the other associate? He should associate with that same Person now."

Know that there are differences of opinion about this, as there are concerning marriage: is it better to marry or not to marry? The truth of that is that it depends upon circumstances. There is the person for whom withdrawal is more meritorious, and there is the person for whom mixing is better. This will not be clear until the benefits and drawbacks of withdrawal have been discussed in detail.

THE BENEFITS OF WITHDRAWAL

Know that there are six benefits in withdrawal from mankind:

THE FIRST BENEFIT is the peace of mind for the remembrance (of God) and reflection: for the greatest of the acts of worship are the remembrance (of God) and reflection upon the wonders of the creative power of God Most High in the kingdoms of the heavens and on earth, and for perceiving the mysteries of God Most High in this world and the next. Indeed, the greatest of these is that one devote one's self in its totality to the remembrance of God Most High so that one be unaware of all that is other than He. One is unaware, too, of one's own self and nothing remains save God Most High. This cannot be achieved except by seclusion and withdrawal (from mankind). All that is other than God Most High is a distraction from God Most High, especially for the person who does not have the strength, while among people, to be with the True One and not with the people, as the prophets (R) were.

It was for this that the Messenger (S), at the beginning of his work, withdrew to Mount Hira and cut himself off from mankind until the light of prophethood gathered strength and reached that degree that he would be with people physically, but his soul would be with God. He said: "If I had taken someone as a friend, I would have taken Abu Bakr, but the love for God itself left no place for any other friend." The people thought that he had a love for each person.

It is not strange if the saints attain that degree too, about which Sahl Tustari (R) says: "For thirty years I have been conversing with God Most High, but people imagine that I am speaking with them." It is not impossible that there be a person so consumed by his love for some creature that, because of this passion, when among people he does not

hear their words or see them. However, just anyone should not be deceived by this, for most of them fall from the business among people.

Someone said to a pious recluse: "How wonderful is thy patience in thy loneliness!" He replied: "I am not alone, for my companion is my God. When I want to confide in Him, I perform formal prayer. When I want Him to confide in me, I read the Quran."

Hasan Basri was told: "There is a man here who always sits alone behind a pillar." (Hasan) said: "When he comes, inform me." When he was told that the man had arrived, he went to him and said: "Thou always sittest by thyself. Why dost thou not mix with the people?" (The man) replied: "Something has happened to me that has distracted me away from mankind." (Hasan) said: "Why dost thou not go to Hasan and listen to his words?" He said: "This task has diverted me from Hasan and mankind." (Hasan) asked: "Why and what is this task?" (The man) replied: "There is no time, none; for God has blessed me, and none, because of my sins. I give thanks for the blessings and I seek forgiveness for the sins. I cannot attend to Hasan, nor to people." (Hasan) said: "Keep thy place for thou art superior to and more learned than Hasan."

Harim bin Hayyan⁸⁹⁷ went to Uways Qarani⁸⁹⁸ (R). Uways asked him: "Why hast thou come?" (Harim) said: "I have come to get comfort from thee." Uways said: "I have never known anyone who knows and recognises God Most High and is given comfort by another."

Fudayl, may God have mercy upon him, said: "When the darkness of night falls, my soul rejoices. I say: 'I shall sit in seclusion with God Most High until daylight comes.' When the light of dawn appears, sadness permeates my soul. I say: 'Now people will distract me from Him.'"

Malik Dinar (R) says: "Whoever speaks with God Most High in private conversation and does not love this more than conversation with (His) creatures has little knowledge. His soul is blind, and his life is wasted."

⁸⁹⁷ Harim bin Hayyan (Harim bin Hayyān): Another of the Followers and an important ascetic of the 1st Islamic (7th CE) century. He left Makkah to visit Uways Qarani (see following Note), missing him at Qaran. Back in Makkah, he heard that Uways was in Kufah, so he journeyed there, but could not find him for a long time. Eventually he found him accidentally on the way to Basrah. Uways was performing an ablution on the banks of the Euphrates. Uways, who had never met Harim, addressed him by name. When Harim asked how he knew his name, Uways replied that his soul knew his soul.

⁸⁹⁸ Uways Qarani: One of the Followers. He was described by the Prophet to the Companions and he asked them to convey his greeting to him. After the Prophet's death, 'Umar sought him from among the people of Qaran. They considered him a madman and said he was living in the desert. 'Umar and 'Ali found him and conveyed the Prophet's message. He fought on the side of 'Ali during the Civil War (for the succession to the caliphate after the death of 'Uthman) and died in the battle of Siffin AH37/657CE.

One of the wise says: "For anyone whose request is that he see someone and sit with him, it is waste if his heart is empty of what it should have and asks for help from outside."

So, from all of this, know thou that whoever has the ability to become habituated to the continuous remembrance of God Most High, or to continuous reflection, obtains the knowledge and spiritual insight of His majesty and beauty. This is greater than any act of worship that is connected with people, for the ultimate of all (kinds of) happiness is that a person goes to (the next) world and that the intimacy and love of God Most High overwhelm him. Intimacy is completed with remembrance, and love is the fruit of spiritual insight. And spiritual insight is the fruit of reflection. All of this is best done in solitude.

THE SECOND BENEFIT is that one is delivered from many sins by cause of withdrawal. There are four sins of mixing (with mankind) that not everyone escapes:

THE FIRST SIN is backbiting or listening to backbiting. That is the ruin of religion.

THE SECOND SIN is with respect to enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. If one is silent, he becomes either a sinner or a rebel (against God); if one forbids the wrong, he makes himself the enemy and terror of many.

The third sin is dissimulation or hypocrisy, for they are necessary in social intercourse. If one is not courteous with people, they are upset. If one is courteous, it soon becomes dissimulation, for separating flattery and dissimulation from courtesy is extremely difficult. If one speaks with two enemies, and agrees with each of them, one is two-faced. If one does not, one will not find release from their enmity. The least of this is that one tells everyone he sees: "I am always solicitous (for thy welfare)." This is most often a lie. If one does not say something like that, they will become alienated. Too, if thou say it, it is hypocrisy and a lie. The least of this is that one enquires of every person: "How art thou and how are thy people?" while in one's mind, one is free of concern about how they are. This is pure hypocrisy.

Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "There is the person who goes out and has business with some person. He is, hypocritically, so laudatory and courteous to that person that he surrenders his religion for that affair. He returns home with his need fulfilled and God Most High angered.

Sari Saqati says: "If a brother comes to me and I stroke my beard to smooth it, I fear that my name will be entered in the registry of hypocrites." Fudayl was sitting some place by himself. Someone came to him. (Fudayl) asked: Why hast thou come?" (The man) replied: "For the peace and friendliness of seeing thee." He said: "By God, this is closer to grief! Thou hast not come except to be courteous to me falsely, and I the same to thee. Go away from here, or I must arise and depart."

When the forefathers, may God have mercy upon them, saw each other, they did not enquire about the affairs of the world; they asked about religion. Hatim Asamm said to Hamid Laffaf:⁸⁹⁹ "How art thou?" (Hamid) replied: "Safe and sound!" Hatim said: "Safe is after thou hast crossed the Bridge⁹⁰⁰ and sound is at the time thou enterest paradise."

When Jesus (A) was asked: "How art you?" he would answer: "That which is of benefit to me is not under my control. I am not able to repel that in which my harm lies. I am the hostage of my own deeds and my affair is controlled by another. So, there is no one poorer or more helpless than I."

When Rabi' Khuthaym (R) was asked how he was, he would say: "Weak, a sinner, and with the moment of death on my neck. I eat of my own sustenance and hope for mercy." When Abu Darda (R) was asked how he was, he would reply: "It is good if I be safe from hell." When Uways Qarani was asked how he was he, he would say: "How would it be with a person who arises in the morning and does not know whether at night he will be alive or not, and at night he does not know that he will be alive in the morning or not?" When Malik Dinar was asked how he was, he said: "How would a person be whose life is diminishing and his sins increasing?" When a sage was asked how he was, he answered: "I eat the sustenance of God Most High and obey the command of His enemy, Iblis."

When Muhammad bin Wasi' was asked how he was, he said: "How would a person be who is every day one stage closer to the Hereafter?" When Hamid Laffaf, may God have mercy upon him, was asked how he was, he answered: "I am in the hope that one day I shall be in good health." They said: "Art thou not in good health?" He replied: "Good health is the day when I do not commit a sin." Someone at the time of death was asked: "How art thou?" He replied: "What would the state of a person be who is starting out on a long journey without provisions, and who will go to the grave without a companion, and who will go before a just King without any defence?" Hassan bin Sinan⁹⁰¹ (R)

⁸⁹⁹ Hamid Laffaf (Hāmid Laffāf): This incident is also found in 'Attar's *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'* in the chapter about Hatim Asamm. This puts him in the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century and probably in the same general region: northern Afghanistan and Central Asia.

⁹⁰⁰ "the Bridge" (*Sirāt*): that is, the bridge over hell.

⁹⁰¹ Hassan bin Sinan: in this place HK gives his names as Ḥassān bin Abi Sinān both in the text and the index, but AA has Ḥassān bin Sinān in his text (AA has no index) and Ibn Khallikan records a Hassan bin Sinan. His full name was Abū Layla Ḥassān bin Sinān bin 'Awfī bin 'Awf Tanūkhī. Born a Christian, became a noted Muslim scholar as his sons were scholars, jurists, and writers. He spoke and wrote Persian, Syriac, and Arabic and it is said that he lived 120 years, dying AH180/796-7CE. However, it must be noted that there was also a Hassan bin Abi Sinan (see Note 1639), who is mentioned by Qushayri as well as by both HK and AA in the Fourth Pillar of this work.

was asked how he was. He replied: "What would the state of a person be who must certainly die, be caused to rise and give an account (of himself)?"

Ibn Sirin (R) asked someone how he was. (The man) replied: "How would it be with a person who owes 500 dirhams, has a family, and has nothing?" Ibn Sirin went home, took 1000 dirhams, and gave it to the man, saying: "Pay 500 dirhams to thy creditor and spend 500 dirhams on your family. I shall not ask anyone how he is again!" This was because he feared that if he could not take care of the person whom he asked, he would be a hypocrite.

The great have said: "We have seen persons who would never greet each other, but if one issued an order to another for all that he possessed, (the other) would not refuse. Now, there are people who visit each other and enquire after each other a lot, even to the hens in the yard, but if they dare to ask one of them for a silver coin, they will meet nothing but refusal. All of this (display of friendship) is nothing but hypocrisy."

Consequently, since the people have become of this kind, whoever mixes with them, if he agrees with them in this hypocrisy and lying, is their partner in it. If he opposes them, they become his enemies and want his misfortune. They busy themselves bearing tales about him. His religion rebukes them, and their religion rebukes him.

THE FOURTH SIN which necessarily comes from social intercourse is that thou art influenced by the character of whomever thou associatest with without thy realizing it. Thy nature steals from his nature without thy knowing it, and that is the seed of many sins, such as sitting with those who are negligent (in their faith). Their likeness will appear in whoever sees the worldly and their avidity for the things of the world.

Whoever sees sinners—even though he may loathe them—when he sees them frequently, (their behavior) will appear less serious to him. The loathing of the soul falls away from every sin that is common. If a theologian is seen in silken garments, all will disparage that; but it may be that they backbite every day and not disparage that, even though backbiting is worse than wearing silk. Indeed, it is worse than adultery, but custom has lessened (the seriousness of backbiting) because of the frequency with which it is done.

Indeed, even listening to the stories of the negligent is damaging, just as listening to the stories of the Companions and saints is profitable. When one remembers them, mercy rains down, as is related in the Tradition: "*At the remembrance of the righteous, mercy descends.*" That means that the cause of that mercy is that a desire for goodness arises

while the desire for the world is reduced as one listens to the events of their lives. In the same way, at the remembrance of the negligent, curses rain down. For, the reasons for the cursing are heedlessness and the desiring of the world. Their remembrance causes a deficiency in faith. Therefore, seeing them is much worse. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "The bad companion is like the blacksmith from whom, (even) if he does not burn thy clothes, thou absorbest the smoke. The good companion is like the perfumer from whom, (even) if he does not give thee musk, thou absorbest the scent." So, know that solitude is better than a bad companion, but a good companion is better than solitude, as is found in the Traditions.

Therefore, social intercourse and sitting with anyone who carries thee away from the desire for the world and invites thee to God Most High is a great windfall. Be his attendant. Keep thy distance from anyone who is the opposite of this, especially the learned person who is greedy for the world and whose actions do not equal his words, for that is a fatal poison and bears away the reputation of a Muslim entirely. He says to himself: "If he had any Islam at all, he would have taken precedence." If a person has a tray of almond cakes in front of him and eats them greedily, crying out: "O Muslims! Keep away from these! They are poisoned!" no one would believe him. His audacity in eating (them) attests to the fact that there is no poison in the cakes. There are many people who would not dare to eat the unlawful or commit sins, but when one hears or sees that a learned person doing just that, he becomes emboldened.

It is for this reason that it is forbidden to narrate a story about the sins of the learned. There are two reasons (for this): one is that it is talebearing and the other is that it encourages people to imitate that person, using his behavior as a justification for their own. Satan rises up in aid of this and says: "Thou wilt not be greater or more abstemious than such-and-such a scholar."

The general condition of that is that when one sees the shortcoming of a religious scholar, one should think two things: one is that one should realize that it may be that the knowledge of that scholar is an atonement for his shortcoming, for knowledge is a great intercessor—and an ordinary person does not have (such) knowledge—when (the scholar) does not act upon what he believes. The other is that one should realize that the scholar's knowing that it is not right to eat of the unlawful is like the commons' knowing that drinking wine and committing adultery is not right. Everyone knows this much, that drinking wine and committing adultery are wrong, but the wine-drinking or adultery of the commons does not become the argument that emboldens a person (to justify those acts). The eating of the unlawful by the scholar should be the same.

Most of the emboldenment for the forbidden is done by persons who are called "religious scholars," but who are devoid of the true nature of knowledge; or they know some excuse or explanation for what they are doing that the commons do not understand. The common folk must look at it this way lest they be destroyed.

The point of this is that the times are such that one ought to avoid association with most people. The example of Moses and Khidr, peace be upon them, in which Khidr holed the boat and Moses protested, was related in the Quran for this.⁹⁰² And, the point is that in such times, association with most people is harmful. Consequently, seclusion and hermitism is to be preferred to (association with) most people.

THE THIRD BENEFIT is that since no city, except as God may will, is free of enmity and temptation, whoever goes into seclusion is delivered from temptation. If he mixes amongst the people, he may fall into temptation, his religion may be injured, and he may become imperiled.

'Abdullah (bin) 'Amr 'As (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "When thou seest the people gather together so"—and he intertwined his fingers—"take an attendant inside the house, hold thy tongue, and do what thou knowest and pass over what thou dost not know. Busy thyself with thine own affairs and withhold thyself from public affairs."

'Abdullah (bin) Mas'ud⁹⁰³ narrates that the Messenger (S) said: "A time will come upon mankind when the religion of a man will not be safe, except that he flee from place to place, from mountain to mountain, and from hole to hole, like a fox that conceals itself from mankind."⁹⁰⁴ And he was asked: "O Messenger of God, when will that be?" He replied: "When a livelihood without sin cannot be made. At that time, it will be lawful to remain unmarried." They asked him: "O Messenger of God, but you have ordered us to marry!" He said: "At that time, the destruction of a man will be at the hands of his mother and father; if they are dead, at the hands of his wife and children. If he does not have these, at the hands of his relatives." They asked: "Why?" He answered: "They will blame him for want and poverty. They will demand things from him

⁹⁰² This is a reference to the famous passage in the Quran (Q. 18:65-82) describing the encounter of Moses with "one of Our servants," not named in the Quran, but called Khidr in Islamic literature. Moses pleads to be allowed to accompany him so that he may learn right conduct from him. There follows a series of strange acts by the servant of God at which Moses begins to rebel, instead of remaining patient. The holing of the boat is one of these mysterious actions. The servant of God upbraids Moses for not his lack of patience and gives the explanation of all of these. Having done so he parts from Moses. See also Note 637.

⁹⁰³ 'Abdullah (bin) Mas'ud: See Ibn Mas'ud, Note 974.

⁹⁰⁴ "like a fox that conceals itself from people," following AA. HK has "like a fox that conceals itself from itself."

that he has not the power to provide, until he falls to self-destruction." In this Tradition, though it is about celibacy, withdrawal (from mankind) is also indicated. And that time, which the Messenger (S) promised a long time before our era, has arrived.

Sufyan Thawri, may God have mercy upon him, used to say about his own era: "*Would to God that celibacy had been made lawful!*" By God, remaining single has now become lawful!

THE FOURTH BENEFIT is that one obtains liberation from the mischief of mankind and is at peace. For, so long as one is among people, one will not be free of their troubling, backbiting, and suspicions, nor will one obtain liberation from impossible cravings, nor will one be devoid of them. For, when they see something from one that their minds do not comprehend, they will start to censure him. If one wishes to meet the rights of all the people—from felicitations, to condolences, to entertaining—one would spend all of his time doing such things and not attend to one's own affairs. If one sets one group over another, the others will become unhappy and displeased with him. But, if he would withdraw, with a single stroke, he would free oneself from all of this and everyone would be happy!

One of the great saints would never be separated from the graveyard and a book, and he would sit alone. He was asked why he behaved thus. He answered: "I have never seen any place sounder than solitude, nor any preacher better than the graveyard, nor any companion better than a book."

Thabit Bunani,⁹⁰⁵ may God have mercy upon him, was one of the saints. He wrote to Hasan Basri: "I have heard that thou art going to perform the Greater Pilgrimage. I would like to accompany thee." Hasan said: "Let us live under the veil of God Most High, for it may happen that when we are together we may see something, one from the other, that will cause enmity between us." This, too, is among the benefits of solitude, so that the curtain of virtue remains in place and the interior does not become exposed, because it may be that something discouraging will become visible.

THE FIFTH BENEFIT is that the people's coveting of one will be broken off and his coveting of them. Many sins are born from this for both (sides). Envy appears in whoever sees the people of the world, and covetousness follows envy, and disgrace follows covetousness. It was for this reason that God Most High said: *And strain not thine eyes toward*

⁹⁰⁵ Thabit Bunani: Thābit al-Bunānī, Abū Muḥammad bin Aslam. Known for piety and asceticism, he died about AH118/736CE.

that which We have provided some pairs among them of the flower of the life of the world. (Q. 20:131)

And the Messenger (S) said: "Do not look at that adorned world of theirs, for it is their temptation." And the Messenger (S) said: "Do not look at whoever is above thee in this world, for the blessings of God Most High to thee may appear humble." If someone sets out to seek the ease of the rich that he sees, he may not attain it and his afterlife will be harmed. If he does not seek it, he will set himself to effort and be patient, but that is also difficult.

THE SIXTH BENEFIT is that one is liberated from the sight of the boring, the foolish, and the people who are naturally abhorrent. A'mash was asked: "Why have your eyes become so damaged?" He said: "From too much looking at boring people." Galen⁹⁰⁶ said: "Just as there is fever in a body, there is fever in the soul, and the fever of the soul is the viewing of the tiresome." Shafi'i (R) says: "I have never sat with a tiresome person that I did not find that that the side of mine towards him was more tired."

While this benefit is a worldly one, yet religion is also connected with it. For, when one sees someone the sight of whom is unpleasant, the tongue or the heart starts to backbite. When one is alone, one is safe from all of that. These are the benefits of withdrawal from mankind.

THE DETRIMENTS OF WITHDRAWAL FROM MANKIND

Know that some religious and worldly aims cannot be attained without other (persons) and cannot be accomplished without mixing with people. In solitude, they are relinquished and the loss of these aims causes the detriments of withdrawal. They are six:

THE FIRST DETRIMENT is that one is left behind in the acquisition of knowledge and instruction. Know that for anyone who has not acquired the obligatory knowledge (of religion) withdrawal is forbidden. However, if one has learned the obligatory things, but is not able to learn or comprehend the other sciences, and desires to withdraw (into seclusion) in order to perform worship, it is lawful. But if one be able learn all of the religious sciences, going into seclusion is a great loss, for those who seclude themselves before acquiring knowledge waste most of their time in sleep, idleness, and useless fretting. Since knowledge which

⁹⁰⁶ Galen (Arabic and Persian *Jālinūs*): A noted Greek physician who served at the court of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121-180CE). His writings produced a compendium of the best of the medical knowledge of the ancient world and were transmitted, in part by the Muslims, to the Renaissance Europe and formed the basis of the further development of medicine and physiology. He lived c.120 to c.200CE.

has not been consolidated is not devoid of pride and deceit in worship, nor of errors of thought and absurdity in belief. If one spends the entire day in acts of worship, it may be that one's ideas with respect to God Most High be blasphemous or heretical and one not know it.

In short, withdrawal is suitable for the religious scholars, but not for the common folk. For, when a common person is ill, it is not right that he flee from the physician. If he treats himself, he will soon perish.

As for teaching, its degree is great. Jesus (A) says: "Whoever knows some knowledge, puts it into practice, and teaches others will be called to the King of the greatest heaven. However, teaching and withdrawal from mankind are not compatible. Therefore, teaching takes precedence over withdrawal from the world. This is with the condition that (the teacher's) intention and the intention of the student be religion and not the seeking of status and wealth. The knowledge taught must be beneficial in religion and that which is more important should come first.

For example, if one starts with obligatory purification, one says that the purification of clothing and the skin is less important. One's aim is another obligatory purification lying beyond that: that is the purification of the eye, ear, tongue, hand, foot, and other parts of the body from sins. He explains this in detail and then commands that it be put into practice. If this be not done, and (the student) seeks the knowledge (of another subject), his purpose is status.

When one has finished with that purification, one says the object of purification is something else beyond that: that is the purification of the soul from the love of the world and from everything other than God Most High. The true meaning of *There is no god but God* is this: that one have no other object of worship save God Most High. Whoever is bound to his own passions *has taken his passions as his god*. He has taken his own inclinations as his god and is deprived of the true nature of faith. He will not know the way of cutting off from passion so long as he does not read thoroughly what we have said in the Deliverers and the Destroyers.⁹⁰⁷ This is an individual obligation⁹⁰⁸ upon all people.

If the student, before he has finished these studies, pursue the knowledge (of the rules concerning) menstruation, divorce, the land tax, and legal opinions about lawsuits; or an opposing creed; or seek the science of scholastic theology, dispute, and debate with the Mu'tazilites and the Karramites⁹⁰⁹ or some other subject, know that he seeks status

⁹⁰⁷ "the Deliverers and the Destroyers": The Fourth and the Third Pillars in this work.

⁹⁰⁸ "individual obligation" (*fard-i 'ayn*): See Note 974.

⁹⁰⁹ Karramites (*Karrāmiyān*): An originally Hanafite group of theologians, founded by Ibn-Karram (d. AH255/869CE) in Khorasan, was active for one or two centuries. Little is known about their positions as none of their books seem to have survived and what we have is from their opponents. Some of the Karramites became noted mystics. (W. Montgomery Watt: *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, p.79. Edinburgh, 1962).

and wealth, not religion. One should keep one's distance from such a person. His evil is great. If he does not debate with the devil that invites him to perdition, and if he does not litigate with his self which is his enemy, yet he desires to debate and litigate with Abu Hanifah, Shafi'i, and the Mu'tazilites, this is the proof that Satan has taken him by the hand and laughs at him.

The traits inside him, such as envy, pride, hypocrisy, conceit, love of the world, and greed for status and wealth—all of these are detriments which may cause his destruction if he does not cleanse them from his soul and become occupied with that which is more correct of the legal opinions concerning marriage, divorce, deposits, and rent. If a person makes a mistake in this, it is nothing more than that his reward drops from two to one, for the Messenger (S) has said: "Whoever exercises independent judgment and does that which is right has two rewards. If he makes a mistake, one." Therefore, if one follows the school of Shafi'i or that of Abu Hanifah, may God have mercy upon them both, the profit is no more than this. If (the student) does not erase those traits from himself, the profit of that is the destruction of his religion.

The times have become such that no more than one or two persons will be found in the great cities who are willing to teach in this manner. Consequently, withdrawal is better for the teacher, for whoever teaches knowledge to a person whose purpose is the world, it is as though he sells a sword to a person who is intent upon brigandage. If one says: "It may be that his intention is for the way of religion," it is as though one were to say: "Perhaps this highwayman will repent one day and go to fight in the defense of the faith." If one says: "A sword will not call him to repent, but knowledge may call him to God," this too is a mistake. For, knowledge of legal opinion and transactions, scholastic theology, grammar, and language call no person to God, because in them there is no caution or persuasion for religion. Indeed, each one of them sows the seeds of envy, pride, arrogance, and bigotry in the heart. *Report is not the same as seeing*. Look at how the persons have been occupied with this knowledge were and how they died.

The knowledge that invites (one) to the Hereafter and restrains (one) from this world is the knowledge of the Traditions and the knowledge of (Quranic) Commentary. We shall discuss these sciences in "The Destroyers" and "The Deliverers." Consequently, that knowledge should be bestowed generously, for it affects all people except the unusual person whose heart is hard. Therefore, if a person seeks this knowledge under the stipulations we have stated, for him withdrawal from mankind is one of the great sins.

So, if a person masters the study of the Traditions, Commentary, and that which is important, but finds the quest for rank dominant over himself, he must flee from teaching, even though there is much good in

his teaching others.⁹¹⁰ His destruction will lie in that, and he will be the sacrifice of others. He will be among those about whom the Messenger (S) said: "God helps His religion by means of people who have no portion of it." Their similitude is that of the candle which lights a home while it burns and diminishes.

It was for this reason that Bishr Hafi buried seven bookcases full of books of Traditions that he had heard and did not narrate more Traditions. He said: "I do not narrate them as I find an appetite for narration in myself. If the appetite would become still, I would narrate." The great ones have said thus: "*Haddathanā*"⁹¹¹ is a gate of the world. Whoever says *haddathanā* is saying: 'Seat me in the highest place.'"

'Ali (R) passed by someone who was seated on a chair lecturing. He said: "He says this: '*Know me!*'" A person sought permission from 'Umar (R) to give advice to the people after the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer. ('Umar) refused. (The man) said: "Dost thou forbid giving advice?" ('Umar) replied: "Yes. I fear that so much of the pride of greatness will inflate thee that thou wilt touch the Pleiades."⁹¹²

Rabi'ah 'Adawiyah⁹¹³ said to Sufyan Thawri (R): "Thou wouldst be a good man if it were not that thou lovest the world." (Sufyan) asked: "What is that?" She said: "Thou lovest to narrate Traditions."

Abu Sulayman Khattabi says: "Avoid and stay away from those who want to associate with you and learn knowledge in this era, for in them there is neither wealth nor beauty. Outwardly, they are friends, but inwardly, enemies. They praise you to your face and say ugly things about you in your absence. They are all hypocrites, gossips, rumormongers, deceivers, tricksters, and frauds. Their motive is to make of thee a ladder for themselves for their own corrupt purposes. They will make an ass out of thee so that they can ride about the city at their pleasure. They consider their coming to thee a favor and want thee to sacrifice thine own reputation, status, and wealth in exchange for their coming to thee. (They want) thee to rise to the fulfillment of all the rights of themselves, their relatives, and their adherents; that thou be their people's fool and the enemy of their enemies. If thou violatest any of these, how clear will they make their enmity about thy reputation and thy knowledge!"

⁹¹⁰ As Ghazzali himself fled from teaching in Baghdad during a spiritual crisis.

⁹¹¹ *haddathanā*: "He related to us...", the traditional beginning of the narration of a Tradition in Arabic.

⁹¹² The constellation also known as the Seven Sisters (Ar. *thurayyā*).

⁹¹³ Rabi'ah al-'Adawiyah (Rābi'ah 'Adawiyah) of the tribe of Qays bin 'Adi: Perhaps the most famous woman mystic and ascetic in the history of Islam, she was born in either AH95/713-4CE or four years later and died at Basrah in AH135/752CE or, according to some, AH180/796CE. Born into a poor family, she was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery, but her sanctity achieved her freedom. She taught mystic love (*muḥabbah*) and intimacy (*uns*) with God. Her prayers are justly admired. (SEI, etc.)

In truth, it is as he said: "No student today will accept a teacher for nothing. First, he will demand a stipend that goes on and on. The wretched teacher does not have the strength to abandon students, for then he will no longer be respected by public opinion. Neither can he come up with their stipends without serving oppressors and dissimulating with them. He places his Islam on their heads and obtains nothing from them." But, for him who can teach and remain distant from these detriments, teaching is superior to withdrawal.

Now, it is the convention of the common person that he not have a bad opinion about any scholar he sees lecturing and teaching; that (he not think) that "(the scholar) is doing this for wealth and status." Rather, he thinks that (the scholar) is doing it for God Most High, for it is his religious obligation to think thus. But when the inside is unclean, there is no room left for good opinion, for each person thinks that everything that is in himself is in the people. Therefore, these remarks have been delivered so that the religious scholar fulfill the conditions of his task and the common person not make this an excuse for his own stupidity and also not censure the religious scholars, for (the scholar) may be ruined by this bad opinion.

THE SECOND DETRIMENT is that one is restrained from taking profit and conferring profit. However, getting profit is earning that cannot be accomplished without mixing (with people). It is not proper for a man with a family to withdraw from mankind and not engage in earning a livelihood (to support them), for harm inflicted upon the family is one of the great sins. If one has the means for sustenance and does not have a family, withdrawal is preferred.

Conferring benefit is to give voluntary charity and to stand up for the rights of Muslims. If one is in retreat and one does not engage in anything other than outward worship, it would be better for one to engage in a lawful enterprise and give voluntary charity than to seclude oneself. And if in one, the way is opened to the spiritual knowledge of God Most High and familiarity with the secret conversation with Him, this is preferable to all voluntary donations, for the aim of all acts of worship is this.

THE THIRD DETRIMENT is that one is deprived of the spiritual struggle and spiritual self-discipline that comes from enduring the nature of people. This is a great benefit for the person who has not yet fully attained spiritual self-discipline, for a good nature is the root of all spiritual disciplines and acts of worship. They are not accomplished without mixing (with mankind), as a good nature is that one which tolerates the absurdities of people. The servants of the Sufis mix so that by means of the begging from the ordinary folk they may shatter their pride and haughtiness. They smash their miserliness by providing for the

Sufis. By enduring their bad dispositions, they cut off their own bad dispositions from themselves.

This has been the beginning of the task, even though now intention and thought have been altered and for some, the object is wealth and status. Consequently, if a person has attained spiritual self-discipline, withdrawal is better for him. The object of spiritual self-discipline is not that one always suffer distress, just as the aim of some medicines is not the bitterness, rather, it is that the ailment go away. When it has gone, it is not a condition that one must continue forever to take the bitter medicine. Instead, the objective of spiritual self-discipline is to acquire a fondness for the remembrance of God Most High. The objective of spiritual self-discipline is to drive away from oneself whatever holds one back from that fondness so that one may attend to it.

Know that just as spiritual self-discipline is inescapable, so too is giving spiritual self-discipline and training to others a part of the work of religion. This cannot be accomplished in conjunction with withdrawal. Indeed, there is no way for the shaykh to escape mixing with his disciples. Withdrawal from them cannot be a condition. However, just as the religious scholars must be wary of the stumbling blocks of hypocrisy and the quest for status, so too the shaykhs must be wary (of them). When these conditions are observed, their mixing with others is superior to withdrawal.

THE FOURTH DETRIMENT is that in seclusion, one may be overcome by the whisperings (of Satan) and the soul may abhor the remembrance (of God) and be seized with fatigue. This will not be relieved except by conviviality with people. Ibn 'Abbas (R) says: "If I did not fear inner promptings, then I would not associate with people." 'Ali bin Abi Talib (R) says: "Do not take back the peace of soul from the soul; for if thou loathe the soul once, it becomes blind."

Therefore, there must be an hour each day with someone in whose company one may find rest, for that increases liveliness. However, that person must be one with whom he discusses religion. They talk over their own circumstances with respect to religious shortcomings and the arrangement for the facilitation of religious affairs. But sitting with the heedless, even but for an hour, is injurious. That pure joy which has come into being during the rest of the day is darkened. The Messenger (S) said: "One must be alert to who are the friends of him who sits with thee as a friend."

THE FIFTH DETRIMENT is that the spiritual reward of visiting the sick, accompanying a bier, responding to invitations, congratulating, offering condolences, and (performing) other social duties is lost. But in these acts, there are also detriments and the custom of hypocrisy and ostentation may find a way into him, too. There is the person who cannot

withhold himself from these detriments, but cannot execute their requirements. It is better for such a person to seclude himself. There are and have been many people among the forefathers who have done thus and who have abandoned all such things, for they have seen their own safety in doing so.

THE SIXTH DETRIMENT is that mixing with and attending to the rights of people is a type of humility, and in withdrawal, there is a kind of arrogance. It may be that the motive for seclusion is lordship and arrogance. He may want the people to visit him and he not visit them.

It has been related that there was a great wise man among the Children of Israel. He had written 360 books about wisdom, so he thought that he had achieved some place close to God Most High. A revelation came to the messenger of that time: "Say unto him: 'There is much chatter in the land and thou hast made thine own name and fame. I do not accept all of this chatter about thee.'" Then he became afraid and ceased that activity. He sat in seclusion and said: "Will God Most High now be pleased with me?" A revelation came: "I am not pleased with thee." Then he came out of seclusion and began to go to the market and mix with the people. He would sit with him and rise with them; he would eat and walk about the market. Then a revelation came: "Now thou hast gained My pleasure!"

Therefore, know that perhaps some one may choose withdrawal out of pride and the fear that he not be respected in assemblies and gatherings. Or, he may fear that they see his deficiencies in his knowledge and actions. He makes that retreat a curtain to conceal his own deficiencies. He is always in the hope that people will come to visit him, look for a blessing, seek propinquity, and kiss his hand. This is the essence of hypocrisy.

The sign of the withdrawal for the sake of God Most High is in two things: one is that one does not remain idle in seclusion. One is busy with remembrance (of God) and meditation, and busy with knowledge and worship. The other is that one finds the visits of people who come to him repugnant, except that of the person from whom there is some religious benefit.

Abu al-Hasan Hatimi⁹¹⁴ was one of the lords of Tus. He went to greet Khwajah Abu al-Qasim Gurgani⁹¹⁵ (R). He was one of the great saints. (Abu al-Hasan) began to apologize, saying: "It is my fault that I

⁹¹⁴ Abu al-Hasan Hatimi (Abū al-Ḥasan Ḥātīmī): a 4th Islamic (10th CE) century. No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

⁹¹⁵ Khwājah Abū al-Qāsim Gurgānī: An important Sufi of the 4th Islamic (10th CE) century Khorasani school. One of his students, Shaykh Abu 'Ali Farmudi is mentioned as a friend of Ghazzali. (Safa)

do not come to serve thee more often." (Abul-Qasim) replied: "O Khwajah, do not make excuses. Everyone (else) is grateful for coming, but we are grateful for not-coming. For us, because of the coming of that elder, we have no anxiety of the heart about anyone, that is, the Angel of Death." A prince went to Hatim Asamm and said: "What dost thou need?" (Hatim) replied: "That I not see thee and thou not see me."

Know that retiring into seclusion so that people honor one is a great ignorance; for the lowest of the degrees is that one comprehends that nothing of his affair is in the hands of the people. He knows that if he goes to the top of a mountain, the faultfinder will say: "He is dissimulating." If he goes into a tavern, his friends and disciples will say: "He is traveling the road of censure, so he throws himself out of the sight of people." In whatever he is, the people will be of two groups with respect to him. He must attach his soul to religion, not to mankind.

Sahl Tustari (R) told one of his disciples to do something. He replied: "I cannot, out of fear of what people will say." Sahl turned to his companions and said: "A person will not reach the truth of this affair unless he gains one of two qualities: either people will depart from his sight so that all that he sees is God, or he will not look upon them so that he has no fear of the manner in which people see him."

Hasan Basri (R) was told: "Some people come to thine assemblies and learn some matters so that they may object to them and seek out their defects." He said: "I have seen that my own self covets the highest heaven and the neighborhood of God Most High, but it never covets safety from mankind, for even their Creator is not safe from their tongues."

Therefore, from all of this, the benefits and detriments of seclusion are made manifest. Each person must take stock of himself and review himself in that respect, so that he may know which may take precedence for him.

THE RULES OF WITHDRAWAL FROM MANKIND

When a person goes into seclusion, he must declare the intention to withhold his own evil from mankind, to seek safety from the evil of mankind, and to seek the quiet to worship God Most High.

He must never be idle; rather, he should busy himself with remembrance, meditation, knowledge, and deed. He should not let people come to him, nor should he enquire about the news and false rumors of the city. He should not enquire about the condition of people, for everything that he will hear will be a seed in his breast and sprout from his breast when he is alone. The most important work in private is the cutting off of the inner voices so that remembrance may be pure. The news of people is the seed of the inner voices.

He must be satisfied with meager food and clothing. If he is not, he is not without need of the association with people. He must patient with the sorrow of his neighbors and not pay attention to whatever they say or do concerning him, either in praise or censure. If they call him a hypocrite in seclusion or sincere, or humble, or proud, he should not listen to it, for all of this roils his life. The objective of withdrawal from mankind is that one be engaged and immersed in the work of the Hereafter.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE RULES OF CONDUCT ON A JOURNEY

Know that there are two (kinds of) journey: one is outward, the other is inward.

As for the inward journey, it is the journey of the soul in the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth, the wonders of the handiwork of God Most High, and the stages of the way of faith. The (inward) journey for true men⁹¹⁶ is this, that they sit in their rooms while they wander through a heaven, the breadth of which is many times greater than the seven heavens and earths,⁹¹⁷ plus more! The worlds of the empyrean are the Paradise of the mystics: that heaven the entrance to which is not achieved without prohibition, cutting off, and hindrance. God Most High invites (the people) to this journey when He says: *Have they not considered the heavens and the earth and what things God hath created?* (Q. 7:185)

For the person who is incapable of making this journey, perhaps he may make an external journey and transport the body so that he may take some benefit from each place. The similitude of this person is that of the person who walks on his own feet to the Ka'bah in order to see the external aspect of the Ka'bah. The similitude of the other is that of a person who sits at home until the Ka'bah comes to him and circumambulates him and tells him its secrets. There is a great difference between these two. Concerning this, Shaykh Abu Sa'id Abu al-Khayr, may God have mercy upon him, said: "While some blister their feet, others reach the goal without blisters."⁹¹⁸

We shall discuss the rules of conduct for the outward journey in two sections in this book. As the inward journey is very subtle, it would not accept exposition in this book. The first part concerns the Intention of travel, its rules of conduct, and its different kinds. The second part concerns the knowledge of the concessions of travel.

⁹¹⁶ "true men" (Per. *mardān*): the plural of "man" (*mard*), it has a specialized meaning of "heroes, warriors, men of manly character." (Steingass) Ghazzali appears to be using the word in the sense of "great men of faith, adepts." Though masculine in form, we do not believe that it is meant to exclude the possibility of female saints such as Rabi'ah al-'Adawiyah (see Note 913), whom Ghazzali mentions with approval in this work several times.

⁹¹⁷ The (seven) earths: the seven climates or climatic regions.

⁹¹⁸ That is: those immersed in the outward aspect of things must endure great physical suffering to achieve their ends, while those immersed in the inner world achieve that without physical effort.

**PART ONE: CONCERNING THE INTENTION OF TRAVEL,
ITS RULES OF CONDUCT, AND ITS DIFFERENT KINDS**

Know that there are five kinds of journey:

THE FIRST JOURNEY is in the search for knowledge. This journey is a religious obligation when it is for the acquisition of the knowledge of religious obligations. It is a Practice of the Prophet when it is for the learning of those Practices. The journey to acquire knowledge has three aspects:

ONE is that it be to acquire knowledge of the Law and Doctrine. It is related in the Traditions: "Whoever departs through the gate of his house in the quest for knowledge is on the path of God until he returns." It is also related in the Traditions: "The angels spread their wings over the student." Among the forefathers, there was a person who traveled a great distance for a single Tradition. Sha'bi⁹¹⁹ says: "If a person travels to me from Syria in order to hear something, there is a benefit from that in the way of religion for him. His journey is not wasted." However, it must be a journey for some knowledge that will equip him for the Hereafter. Every bit of knowledge that does not call him from the world to the Hereafter, from envy to contentment, from hypocrisy to sincerity, and from the worship of the created to the worship of the Truth (God)—such knowledge is a cause of loss for him.

THE SECOND ASPECT is that one make the journey in order to know oneself and one's own character, so that one may work to treat those characteristics in oneself that are objectionable. It is also important that people, when they are in their own homes and affairs are going according to their wishes, have a good opinion of themselves and think that they are good-natured. On a journey, however, the veil is removed from their inner natures and circumstances occur which make known their own weaknesses, ill-natures, and inadequacies. When the disease is known, they may attend to its cure. Whoever has not made a journey is not brave in affairs. Bishr Hafi (R) said: "O readers (of the Quran), travel to cleanse yourselves, for any water that remains in one place becomes foul."

THE THIRD ASPECT is that one travel in order to see the handiwork of God Most High on land and sea, mountain and plain, and in the various climes; to become acquainted with the variety of different creatures among animals, plants, etc., in the various quarters of the world; and to realize that all glorify their Creator and testify to His Oneness. The person whose eyes were opened by this can hear words of

⁹¹⁹ Sha'bi: Abū 'Amr 'Āmir bin Sharāḥil al-Sha'bi (AH19-103/640-721-2CE), one of the Followers (*Tābi'in*).

praise without word or sound. He can read the Divine Script written on the face of all existing things, without letters or lines. From these, he can learn the secrets of the Kingdom. He himself has no need of circumambulating the world. Instead, he looks at the kingdom of the heavens that circumambulates about him every night and day and speaks the marvels of their own secrets to him. A herald cries out: *How many a portent is there in the heavens and the earth which they pass by with face averted!* (Q. 12:105) Indeed, if a person examines the marvels of his own creation and understands its parts and attributes, he would see in himself the arena for his contemplation all his life. Indeed, he will then see the wonders of himself. Passing beyond the external eye, he opens the inner eye.

One of the great ones says: "People say open your eyes to see the wonders. I say close your eyes to see the wonders." Both are right, for the first stage is to open the external eye and see the marvels. Then, one goes to another stage and the external marvels, which are related to the worldly physical bodies, come to an end. They are exhaustible, but there is no end to the inner marvels as they are related to souls and truths, and there is no end for the truths. In whatever form that it is spiritual and true, the form is the portion of the external eye and the true nature is the portion of the inner eye. The form is very worthless. It is like the person who sees a tongue and thinks that it is a piece of flesh. He sees a heart and supposes that is a blob of black blood. He must look to see what the value of this, which is the portion of the external eye, is beside that which is the true nature of the tongue and heart! All of the parts and atoms of the world are like that. The degree of whoever has looked with nothing more than the external eye is near the degree of a quadruped. However, in some traditions it is said: "The external eye is the mould of the internal eye." For this reason, a journey undertaken to admire the wonders of creation is not devoid of benefit.

THE SECOND JOURNEY is for worship, such as for performing the Greater Pilgrimage, fighting in defence of Islam, and visiting the graves of the prophets, Companions, and the Followers; indeed, (also) visiting religious scholars and the great ones of religion—for looking at their countenances is an act of worship and the blessing of their supplication is great. One of the blessings of seeing them is that it creates a desire to emulate them. Therefore, seeing them, too, is an act of worship and also the seed of many acts of worship. When the benefits of their breaths⁹²⁰ and words aid in this, the benefits are doubled. Going the graves of the saints on purpose is lawful. The Messenger (S) said: "*Do not make the*

⁹²⁰ Breaths (*anfās*). This is a metaphor for the spiritual reward (*thawāb*) of association and sitting with them, close enough to feel their breaths.

preparations for a journey except to the three mosques." This refers to the mosques of Makkah, Madinah, and Jerusalem. The reason for this is that mausoleums and mosques do not confer blessing, except those of those three places. However, if a visit is to living religious scholars, it is not included in this (rule), and when they are dead they still are not included in this. Consequently, the visiting of the graves of the prophets, saints, and theologians on purpose and traveling for that purpose is lawful.

THE THIRD JOURNEY is to flee something that confuses religion, such as status, wealth, sovereign power, or the business of the world. This journey is a religious obligation upon that person for whom keeping to the way of religion is not made easy by the activities of the world; for the way of religion can be found with peace of mind. However much a person is never able to be (totally) free from the necessity of his own affairs, he can be disencumbered: *the disencumbered have been saved*, even though they are not without a burden. Usually, those who find some pomp and knowledge are diverted from God.

Sufyan Thawri says: "These are bad times. Even the obscure and the unknown are afraid, so what will be the state of the famous? It is the time that thou flee every place where thou art known and go to some other place where thou art not known." And he too was seen going with a sack on his back. They asked him: "Where art thou going?" He answered: "I am going to such-and-such a village where they give food more cheaply." They said: "How dost thou consider this lawful?" He said: "Wherever the living is more ample, go there, for religion is safer and the heart more tranquil." Ibrahim Khawass, may God have mercy upon him, never remained in any city more than forty days.

THE FOURTH JOURNEY is that for trade seeking the goods of the world. This is a permissible journey. If by this one intends to deliver himself and his family from dependence upon others, this journey is an act of devotion (to God). If it is for an excess of worldly goods, for pride and adornment, it is the way of Satan. It usually happens that this person travels in suffering his entire life, for no end appears to the increase of solvency. Then, at the end, he will be attacked on the road, or his wealth will be stolen, or he will die in some foreign place and the (local) ruler will seize his property. The best that may happen is that his heirs will get hold of it and spend it to satisfy their whims and lusts without remembering him. As much as possible, his will is not implemented, his debts not repaid, and the worries of the Hereafter will remain with him. There is no swindle greater than this: that he bear all that hardship and carry all the care, while others enjoy the comfort (of the fruit of his efforts).

THE FIFTH JOURNEY is that of sightseeing and recreation. This is lawful if it is not long and it is occasional. However, if a person becomes habituated to traveling about cities without any purpose except to see new cities and new people, there is a difference of opinion about this (type of) journey among the religious scholars. Some are of the opinion that it is giving oneself trouble uselessly and therefore not proper. The correct view in our opinion is that it is not forbidden, for sightseeing is also a purpose, even though it be base, and it is permissible for everyone it suits. Such people have a base nature and this motivation, too, is suited to them.

There are others who wear rags and have grown accustomed to going from city to city and place to place without its purpose being the visit to a spiritual guide⁹²¹ and attendance upon him. Rather, their purpose is sightseeing, for they have not the strength for the acts of worship. The way has not been opened unto them from within to the stations of Sufism. Under the rule of laziness and idleness, they do not have the endurance to stay in one place under the authority of one of the spiritual guides. They roam the cities and wherever there is a bounteous dining cloth, there they linger longer. If it is not according to their desire, they berate the servant, insult him, and move on to another place where they are told the dining is better. They may make of the visit to a tomb a pretext, saying: "This (visit) is our objective," when it is not. If this journey is not forbidden, it is certainly repugnant.

These people are censurable, even if they are not rebels (against God) or sinners. Wherever they eat the bread of the Sufis and beg and make themselves up in the appearance of Sufis, they are rebels and sinners, and what they receive is unlawful. Not everyone who wears a ragged garment and prays the five obligatory formal prayers is a Sufi. Indeed, the Sufi is he who has some quest and is heading in that direction, has attained that, or is endeavoring to (attain it). He does not take anything except what is needed for that, or he is a person who is occupied with the service of these people. The bread of the Sufis is not lawful for more than these three types.

As for that man who is haughty and whose inner being is devoid of the quest and spiritual effort, and who does not serve, he does not become a Sufi by donning the tattered robe. Rather, if there is something that has been made as an endowment for scoundrels, it is lawful for him. That he has appeared unnecessarily in the shape of a Sufi, without their character, is nothing other than hypocrisy and rascality. The worst of these people is the one who has learned a few paltry phrases from the Sufis and repeats them futilely. They think the first and last of knowledge has been opened to them because they can say those things. It

⁹²¹ "spiritual guide": *pîr*.

may be that the evil of their speech lead to their looking upon knowledge and the religious scholars with contempt. And it may be that the Religious Law will appear trivial to them and they may say: "This is for the weak; for those persons (such as us) who have become strong on the way (of the Sufis), nothing can cause any harm." Their religion has become two jugs⁹²² that does not accept any uncleanness. When they have reached this level, executing one of them is better than killing a thousand unbelievers in India or Rome,⁹²³ for people are on their guard against the unbelievers, but these accursed ones nullify Islam using the rhetoric of the basis of Islam. In this era, Satan has not spread any snare like this snare into which so many have fallen and been destroyed.

THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR THE TRAVELER
THE OUTWARD RULES OF CONDUCT FOR THE TRAVELER, FROM THE
BEGINNING TO THE END

There are eight rules of conduct:

THE FIRST RULE is that first one should settle grievances and return deposits to their owners. One should give the subsistence money to those for whom one is responsible. One should prepare lawful provisions for the journey and take enough so that one will be able to entertain one's fellow travelers. Giving food, speaking pleasantly, and behaving gently with the animal drivers during a journey are among the virtues of good character.

THE SECOND RULE is that one should find a suitable friend to be his helper in religion. The Messenger (S) prohibited travel by oneself, having said: "Three makes a group." And he has said: "They must make one of their number the leader." For, on journeys, many problems occur and any affair not controlled by one person will end in ruin. If the affairs of the universe were with two gods, it would be very ruinous indeed! The person selected to be the leader should have a good character together with considerable experience of travel.

THE THIRD RULE is that one bid farewell to one's friends (who are) present and recite to each one the supplication which the Messenger (S) would say: "*I entrust thy religion, thy security, and the conclusions of thy work to God.*" And, when one of those close to him went on a trip, the Messenger (S) would say: "*May God provide thee with piety and*

⁹²² "two jugs" (*dū qullah*): See Note 210 to Prolegomena.

⁹²³ Rome: This refers to the Eastern Roman Empire, in Ghazzali's time confined to the capital at Constantinople (Istanbul), the southern Balkan Peninsula, Greece, and the coastal regions of northern and western modern Turkey.

forgive thy sin and direct thee to the good wherever thou betakest thyself." This supplication is a Practice of the Prophet to be uttered by those remaining behind (to the person setting out on a journey). When one bids farewell, one should entrust everyone to God Most High. One day 'Umar Khattab (R) was giving presents. A man came with a child. 'Umar said: "*Glory be to God!* I have never seen anyone so resembling another as this child resembles thee." The man said: "I shall inform thee of his wonders, O Commander of the Believers. I went on a journey and his mother was pregnant. She said: 'Wilt thou leave me in this condition?' I said: '*I entrust to God that which is in thy womb.*' Then, when I returned, this child's mother had died (while still pregnant). One night while we were talking, I saw a glow in the distance. I asked what it was. They said: 'That is from the grave of thy wife. I see it every night.' I said: 'That woman performed her obligatory formal prayers and fasted the obligatory fast, what is happening?' I went to the grave and opened it to see what was the matter. I saw a lamp placed in it and this child playing. I heard a voice that said to me: 'This is the one thou didst entrust to Us. If thou hadst also entrusted his mother to Us, thou wouldst have received her back, too!'"

THE FOURTH RULE is that one reduce the obligatory (four-bow) formal prayers to two bows. One should perform a formal prayer of asking God for guidance before setting out on the journey. That formal prayer and its supplications are well known. Next, one should perform a four-bow formal prayer at the time of setting out. Anas says: "A man came to the Messenger (S) and said: "I am thinking about going on a journey. I have written my will. Should I give it to my father, my son, or my brother?" The Messenger (S): "No person who goes on a trip and has left a deputy in his place more liked by God Most High than the performance of four bows (of formal prayer)."⁹²⁴ At the time the bags are packed, one should recite the Praise⁹²⁵ once and the *qul huwa-llahu*⁹²⁶ once. At the end, one should say: "*O God, I seek nearness with these (Quranic verses) to Thee; make them my deputy for my family, my property, and my children. (The prayer) will be his deputy for his family, his property, and a refuge around his house until he returns to his family.*"

THE FIFTH RULE is that when one reaches the gate of the residence, one says: "*In the name of God. I have trusted in God; there is*

⁹²⁴ That is, the prayer itself is the traveler's deputy in his household while he is away.

⁹²⁵ The Praise (*al-Hamdu*): the first chapter of the Quran, the Opening (*Fātiḥah*), which opens with that word meaning "praise be..."

⁹²⁶ The *Qul huwa-llahu*...: the first words of the 112th chapter of the Quran, the Sincerity (*Iklāṣ*), which begins with those words meaning: "Say! He is God..."

no power and no strength save with Go. My Lord, I seek refuge with Thee from going astray or being led astray, from erring or being caused to err, from oppressing or being caused to oppress, or from being ignorant or being made ignorant." When one sits upon one's riding animal, one says: "*Glory be to Him who has subjugated this and we were not able to control them. Truly we are returning to Thee.*" (Q. 43:13-14) Another rule is that one should try to arrange the journey to commence on a Thursday, in the morning, for the Messenger (S) used to start his journeys on Thursdays. Ibn 'Abbas says: "Whoever will go on a trip or will make some request for something from a person, should do so at dawn, for the Messenger (S) has offered this supplication: "*O God, bless my people in their early morning on their Thursday.*" He also said: "*O God, bless my people in their early mornings and their Saturdays and their Thursdays.*" So Saturday and Thursday mornings are blessed.

THE SIXTH RULE is that one make the load of the animal light and not stand on its back when it is standing and not fall sleep. One ought not to strike its face. In the morning and evening, one should go on foot an hour to make (one's own) feet light and to lighten the load of the animal, and to please the animal driver. Some of the forefathers hired (animals) with the condition that they not alight from them at any time. Then, they would dismount so that it would be a voluntary charity for the animal. Any animal that is beaten without cause or is laden with a heavy burden will demand justice at the Resurrection. Abu Darda (R) had a camel that died. He said: "O camel! Take care! Do not complain about me to God. Thou knowest that I loaded thee in accordance with thy strength."⁹²⁷

One must show whatever one is loading upon the animal to the animal driver and make it a condition to obtain his agreement. It is not proper that one add to that. Ibn al-Mubarak was sitting upon an animal. Someone handed him a letter, saying: "Deliver this." He did not accept it, saying: "I have not agreed (about this added burden) with this animal driver." He did not rely on the words of jurists that "(the letter) was virtually weightless and is within the limits of permissibility." Indeed, this righteousness is the perfection of scrupulousness.

THE SEVENTH RULE is that which 'Ayishah (R) says: that the Messenger (S) would take a comb, a mirror, a toothbrush, and a collyrium pot when going on a journey. The Sufis have added a rope and bucket—this was not the custom among the forefathers. Wherever they went, they would perform the dry ablution and contented themselves with stones for cleaning (after bodily functions). They would purify

⁹²⁷ This passage strongly suggests that animals will experience some form of resurrection and demand justice from their abusers.

themselves with any water they did not know to be impure. But even though (taking the rope and the bucket) was not the custom, with respect to these people (the Sufis), it is good because their journeying is not such that they not should abstain from precautions, for caution is good. Moreover, the travels of the forefathers were mostly connected with warfare in defence of Islam, earnest striving,⁹²⁸ and great deeds so that they did not do such things.

THE EIGHTH RULE is that when the Messenger (S) returned from a journey and his eyes fell upon Madinah, he would say: "*O God, make it for us a good abode and livelihood.*" Then he would send someone ahead. He forbade any person from entering his house suddenly. Two persons disobeyed him. Each one saw something disagreeable in his own house and sorrowed for it. Upon his return, he would first go to the mosque and perform a two-bow prayer, and he would say: "*In repentance, in repentance, returning to our Lord. Let no sin pass upon us.*"

It is a confirmed Practice (of the Prophet) to bring the fruits of the journey to the people of one's household. In the Traditions, it is related that if one does not have anything, one should throw a stone in the sack. This represents the confirmation of this Practice. These are the external rules of conduct of travel.

HOWEVER, THE RULES FOR THE ELITE ARE INTERNAL: that one does not undertake a journey until he knows that an increase in his religion lies in it. When on the road, if he finds some deficiency in his soul, he should return. He makes the intention that in every city he goes he will visit the graves of the saints and seek out the shaykhs and take some benefit from each one of them, not so that he can talk about it (when he returns home), saying: "I saw some shaykhs," but so that he can act upon it. He should not stop in any city more than ten days, except at the indication of a shaykh who is the object (of his journey). If he goes to visit a brother, he should not remain more than three days, for that is the limit of hospitality,⁹²⁹ unless he would be upset (by his guest's departure). In that case, he should stay.

When he goes to a spiritual guide, he should not stay more than a single night and day, for the purpose is not more than a visit. When he goes to greet, he should knock on the door of the house and wait until he comes out. He should not begin any matter until (the formalities) of

⁹²⁸ "earnest striving" (*jihād*): any effort, including warfare, in defence of Islam. The term also includes intellectual effort, fighting one's own carnal appetites, spending, and investment, etc., advancing the cause of Islam and the well-being of Muslims.

⁹²⁹ Three days is the traditional limit of hospitality with immunity and without question among the Arabs.

visiting him have first been completed. He should not speak in (the spiritual guide's) presence until asked. When asked, he should confine himself to the reply. If he wishes to pose a question, he should seek permission to do so first. In that city, he should not indulge in pleasure, for that nullifies the sincerity of the visit. He should busy himself on the road with remembrance of God, glorification, and recitation of the Quran in his heart, so that no one hears it. When someone converses with him, he should consider replying to him more important than reciting a Glorification. If he is engaged in some (business or work) in a settled region and that is ready, he should not travel, for that is ingratitude.

PART TWO: IN EXPLANATION OF THAT KNOWLEDGE WHICH TRAVELERS SHOULD LEARN BEFORE SETTING OUT

It is necessary for one to learn the concessions of travel, even if one does not intend to take advantage of them. It may be that some need will compel one (to use them). The method of finding the direction of formal prayer and telling time (of the obligatory formal prayers) must also be learned.

With respect to obligatory purification, there are two concessions: one is wiping with the hands and the other is the dry purification. For the obligatory formal prayers there are two: one is the shortening and the other the conjoining. In the Practice of the Prophet, there are two: performing (the obligatory formal prayer) while mounted on an animal, and performing it while moving. For obligatory fasting, there is one concession: that is breaking the fast. These are the seven concessions:

THE FIRST CONCESSION is the wiping of the hand⁹³⁰ (*mash*) on one's footgear. Whoever who puts on the footgear in a state of complete obligatory purity and then does something which would cause him to lose the state of purity may wipe the footgear until three days and nights have elapsed from the first occurrence (of the impurity). If he is a resident, then it is for one day and night. There are five conditions to this concession:

FIRST, the obligatory purification must be first completed, then the footgear are put on. It is the view of Shafi'i that if one washes one foot and then puts on the footgear before washing the other foot, it is not lawful. Therefore, if one does that, one must take the footgear off the first foot and wash it again.

⁹³⁰ "wiping with the hands" (*mash*): as taking off footgear during travel can be difficult or inconvenient, instead of washing the feet to above the ankle in the usual lesser purification, one may simply pass the moistened hand over the footgear, touching it lightly.

SECOND, the footgear must be such that one is used to walking a little in it. If it does not have leather, it is not lawful.

THIRD, it must reach the ankle. If in the area of obligation,⁹³¹ something is visible or there is a hole (in the footgear), it is not proper, according to Shafi'i (R). However, according to Malik, even if (the footgear) is torn, if one can walk wearing the footgear, it is lawful. This is the older view held by Shafi'i,⁹³² and in our view is preferable, for footgear often gets worn or torn during travel. Repairing it every instant is not possible.

FOURTH, one should not take off the footgear if one has performed the purification by the wiping of the hand. If one takes them off, it is better to redo the purification. If one confines this to washing the feet, it is apparently lawful.

FIFTH, one should not extend the wiping to the leg. Rather, one should wipe the upper part of the foot; the instep is preferred. Wiping with one finger is allowed, but with three fingers is better. One should not stroke more than once. When the stroking exceeds this, one should limit it to one night and day. The Practice of the Prophet is that whenever one wants to put on footgear, one should first turn it upside down. For, one day, when the Messenger (S) had put the footgear on one foot, a crow stole its pair, but dropped it from (its beak) and a snake came out of it. The Messenger (S) said: "Tell whoever has faith in God and the Day of Resurrection not to put on footgear before shaking it."

THE SECOND CONCESSION is the dry purification. We have discussed the details of this in the section Obligatory Purification.⁹³³ We shall not repeat it so as not to be lengthy.

THE THIRD CONCESSION is that one shorten all four-bow obligatory formal prayers to two bows; except in four situations:

FIRST, one should perform them at the proper times. If the prayer has to be made up, it should be performed without shortening.⁹³⁴

SECOND, one should declare the intention of the shortening. If one recites the intention to perform the full obligatory formal prayer, or doubts whether he made that intention or not, it is incumbent upon him to perform the full prayer.

⁹³¹ "area of obligation": this is the part of the foot—the whole foot up to the ankle—which is washed during an obligatory purification using water. If the footgear does not come up to the ankle, thereby exposing part of this area, or is torn or has a hole exposing the foot, then—in this view—the purification by stroking is not lawful.

⁹³² That is, the original view held by Shafi'i, which he later changed to the view given before in the paragraph.

⁹³³ See the First Pillar, Chapter Three.

⁹³⁴ That is, with all of the usual four bows.

visiting him have first been completed. He should not speak in (the spiritual guide's) presence until asked. When asked, he should confine himself to the reply. If he wishes to pose a question, he should seek permission to do so first. In that city, he should not indulge in pleasure, for that nullifies the sincerity of the visit. He should busy himself on the road with remembrance of God, glorification, and recitation of the Quran in his heart, so that no one hears it. When someone converses with him, he should consider replying to him more important than reciting a Glorification. If he is engaged in some (business or work) in a settled region and that is ready, he should not travel, for that is ingratitude.

PART TWO: IN EXPLANATION OF THAT KNOWLEDGE WHICH TRAVELERS SHOULD LEARN BEFORE SETTING OUT

It is necessary for one to learn the concessions of travel, even if one does not intend to take advantage of them. It may be that some need will compel one (to use them). The method of finding the direction of formal prayer and telling time (of the obligatory formal prayers) must also be learned.

With respect to obligatory purification, there are two concessions: one is wiping with the hands and the other is the dry purification. For the obligatory formal prayers there are two: one is the shortening and the other the conjoining. In the Practice of the Prophet, there are two: performing (the obligatory formal prayer) while mounted on an animal, and performing it while moving. For obligatory fasting, there is one concession: that is breaking the fast. These are the seven concessions:

THE FIRST CONCESSION is the wiping of the hand⁹³⁰ (*mash*) on one's footgear. Whoever who puts on the footgear in a state of complete obligatory purity and then does something which would cause him to lose the state of purity may wipe the footgear until three days and nights have elapsed from the first occurrence (of the impurity). If he is a resident, then it is for one day and night. There are five conditions to this concession:

FIRST, the obligatory purification must be first completed, then the footgear are put on. It is the view of Shafi'i that if one washes one foot and then puts on the footgear before washing the other foot, it is not lawful. Therefore, if one does that, one must take the footgear off the first foot and wash it again.

⁹³⁰ "wiping with the hands" (*mash*): as taking off footgear during travel can be difficult or inconvenient, instead of washing the feet to above the ankle in the usual lesser purification, one may simply pass the moistened hand over the footgear, touching it lightly.

SECOND, the footgear must be such that one is used to walking a little in it. If it does not have leather, it is not lawful.

THIRD, it must reach the ankle. If in the area of obligation,⁹³¹ something is visible or there is a hole (in the footgear), it is not proper, according to Shafi'i (R). However, according to Malik, even if (the footgear) is torn, if one can walk wearing the footgear, it is lawful. This is the older view held by Shafi'i,⁹³² and in our view is preferable, for footgear often gets worn or torn during travel. Repairing it every instant is not possible.

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⁹³¹ "area of obligation": this is the part of the foot—the whole foot up to the ankle—which is washed during an obligatory purification using water. If the footgear does not come up to the ankle, thereby exposing part of this area, or is torn or has a hole exposing the foot, then—in this view—the purification by stroking is not lawful.

⁹³² That is, the original view held by Shāfi'ī, which he later changed to the view given before in the paragraph.

⁹³³ See the First Pillar, Chapter Three.

⁹³⁴ That is, with all of the usual four bows.

THIRD, one should not perform (a shortened) prayer behind a leader who is performing the complete prayer. If the leader is performing the complete prayer, one must do the same. Indeed, if one has reason to think that the imam is a resident and will perform the complete prayer, or has a doubt about this, performing the complete prayer is incumbent upon him, for it is not easy to tell a resident from a traveler. However, if one knows that the imam is a traveler and one is doubt about whether he will shorten the prayer or not, it is lawful for him to shorten the prayer when the imam does so, for the intention is unknown⁹³⁵ and one cannot make the knowledge of that a condition.

FOURTH, that the journey be lengthy and permissible. The journey of a fugitive slave, the journey of a person for brigandage, going in search of unlawful stipends, or going without the permission of one's mother and father are forbidden and the concession is not lawful for such a person. It is the same for someone fleeing a creditor, but who has the funds to repay his debt. In summary, a journey is for some purpose and if that purpose which has prompted the journey is unlawful, the journey is unlawful.

A long journey is that which is (at least) sixteen parasangs.⁹³⁶ Less than that does not qualify for the concessions. Each parasang has 12,000 paces. The journey commences at the point one leaves the built-up area of the city, even if one is not beyond ruins and gardens. The end of the journey occurs when one reaches the built-up area of one's home or in another town in which one intends to reside for three days or more, not counting the day of arrival and the day of departure. If one is not decided but must take care of some affairs and does not know when they will be completed, and he waits every day expecting them to be completed, and he delays more than three days—in one view, which is closer to analogy—it is lawful that one shorten his prayer. One is like the traveler whose mind is not made up and has no settled purpose.

THE FOURTH CONCESSION is the joining of prayers. It is lawful during a long, permitted journey. The noon obligatory formal prayer is delayed until it is performed together with the afternoon obligatory formal prayer,⁹³⁷ or the afternoon obligatory formal prayer is advanced

⁹³⁵ The declaration of Intention reciting before each formal prayer is done silently, so one who joined the prayer would not know whether the imam was a resident or not, or whether he intended to shorten the prayer or not.

⁹³⁶ Sixteen parasangs (*farsang*): a distance equivalent to 16 leagues or about 57 miles, depending upon the terrain. In modern Iran, a *farsang* (or *farsakhi*) equals roughly 6 kms. A parasang was originally based on the distance one could travel in an hour, so it would vary with terrain and other conditions.

⁹³⁷ This is called the Delayed Joining (*jam' i ta' khir*). When this is done, the afternoon obligatory formal prayer precedes the noon obligatory formal prayer.

and performed with the noon obligatory formal prayer,⁹³⁸ the same for the sunset and evening prayers. When the afternoon obligatory formal prayer is advanced to the time of the noon obligatory formal prayer, the afternoon prayer does not precede the noon prayer.

It is better that one not omit the voluntary formal prayers of the Practice of the Prophet so as not to lose their spiritual merit, for the journey will not profit by that. However, if one so desires, one may perform them while riding or walking. Their order is that first one performs the four-bow formal noon prayer of the Practice of the Prophet, then the four-bow formal afternoon prayer of the Practice. Then, the call to obligatory formal prayer is given, followed by the call to assemble in ranks. Then, the obligatory noon prayer is performed. After that, the call to assemble in ranks is given for the afternoon obligatory prayer. If one is to perform the dry purification, one renews it. Then, the afternoon obligatory formal prayer is performed. There is no delay between the two obligatory formal prayers except that necessary for giving the call to assemble in ranks and the obligatory purification (if necessary). Then one performs the two-bow formal prayer of the Practice of the Prophet that follows the afternoon obligatory formal prayer.⁹³⁹

If the noon obligatory formal prayer is delayed,⁹⁴⁰ it is the same. If one has performed the afternoon obligatory formal prayer, one does not repeat it when arriving at a town before sunset. The rule for the sunset and evening obligatory formal prayers is the same. One opinion holds that joining prayers is lawful on a short journey as well.

THE FIFTH CONCESSION is performing the formal prayers of the Practice of the Prophet on the backs of animals is lawful and it is not necessary to face in the direction of prayer (Makkah). Indeed, the road takes the place of the direction of prayer. If one deliberately makes a turn of direction while performing a formal prayer and that not in the true direction of prayer, then the prayer is nullified, but if the turn is made by error or the animal is refractory, then there is no harm. The bows and prostrations are performed by gesture. One bends forward (for the bow), more so for the prostration. It is not required that one bow so much so as to put oneself in danger of falling. If one is on a litter, one should perform the bows fully.

THE SIXTH CONCESSION is to perform the formal prayers of the Practice of the Prophet while walking. At the beginning, one declares the Magnification while facing in the direction of prayer, which is easy for

⁹³⁸ This is called the Advanced Joining (*jam^c-i taqdim*). In this case, the prayers are performed in order.

⁹³⁹ This has been a description of the order of formal prayers in the Advanced Joining.

⁹⁴⁰ That is, the Delayed Joining.

him but difficult for a person riding (an animal). The bows and prostrations are performed by token movements. One walks at the time of the Testimony and recites the greetings. One must watch so as not to step in any filth. It is not incumbent upon a person to turn from the road because of the filth on the way and to make things difficult for oneself. It is lawful for whoever is fleeing an enemy or is in a battle or is fleeing a dog or a wolf to perform the obligatory formal prayer on foot or on the back of an animal, as we have described for the prayers of the Prophet's Practice; and it will not be necessary to make them up.

THE SEVENTH CONCESSION is that one may break the fast. If a traveler has already made the intention for the fast, it is lawful for him to break it. However, if he has come out of the city after the dawn it is not lawful to break it. If he breaks it after reaching a city, it is not lawful for him to eat bread in the daylight hours. If he has not broken the fast before reaching the city, it is not lawful to break it then. It is better to shorten prayers than to perform them in full so that one is relieved of doubt and dispute. In the opinion of Abu Hanifah, performing them fully is not lawful. However, keeping the fast takes precedence lest one fall into the danger of (the need to) make up (the fast), except when one fears for oneself or does not have the strength to do so. In that case, breaking the fast is better.

Of these seven concessions, three are for long journeys: shortening (prayers), breaking the fast, and the three-day (purification by) wiping the hands over one's footgear. Three are lawful for a short journey: performing the prayers of the Prophet's Practice on the backs of animals and while walking, the missing of the Friday obligatory congregational prayer,⁹⁴¹ and performing the formal prayers using the dry ablution without making them up. As for the joining of two obligatory formal prayers, there is a difference of opinion. It would appear that it is not permitted on a short trip.

These religious scholars must instruct travelers before they set out, for when on the journey, there will be no one to teach them at the time of need. One must learn the methods for establishing the direction of prayer and the methods for establishing the times of prayer too, for the road is not by way of towns and villages and the direction of prayer is obscure. One should know this much: where the sun is at the time of the noon prayer when you turn to the direction of prayer; how it is at the time of its setting and its rising; and where the (north) pole is. If there is

⁹⁴¹ This is not explicitly mentioned in the preceding catalog of concessions although it is a concession for travelers.

a mountain on the way, one should know whether the direction of prayer is to the right or left. There is no escape from these things.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR LISTENING TO MUSIC AND ECSTASY

We shall discuss the rule about music in two parts:

PART ONE: CONCERNING THE PERMISSIBILITY OF LISTENING TO MUSIC AND WHAT OF THAT IS UNLAWFUL AND WHAT OF THAT IS LAWFUL

Know that God Most High has a secret in the human soul. It is hidden in it just as fire in iron. When a stone is struck on iron, the secret (fire) is made manifest and plain. In the same way, listening to fine music⁹⁴² and rhythmic song excites that essence of the soul. Something appears in it without a person's having any choice about it. The reason for this is the relationship that the essence of every human being has with the World of the Sublime: that which is called the world of spirits. The World of the Sublime is the world of excellence and beauty; the root of excellence and beauty is proportion.⁹⁴³ Whatever is in proportion gives proof of the beauty of that world. For, every beauty, excellence, and proportionality that is perceived in this world is all the fruit of the beauty, excellence and proportionality of that world.

Therefore, a sweet, rhythmic, proportioned song also has a resemblance to the marvels of that world. Because of this, an awareness is awakened in the soul. A movement—a yearning—is born that the (listener) himself may not understand what it is. This is in a soul that is simple and devoid of being affected by passion and yearning. However, if it is not empty and is occupied with something, that with which it is occupied starts to move and brighten, as does a flame when it is breathed upon.

For the person whose soul has been conquered by the fire of the love of God Most High, music is important, for it makes that fire burn hotter. However, for anyone whose soul harbors love for the false, music is fatal poison for him and is forbidden to him.

The religious scholars are divided about whether music is lawful or unlawful. He who holds that it is unlawful is of the superficial and has not come to understand that the love of God Most High truly alights in

⁹⁴² Music: the Arabic word used here (*samāʿ*) is derived from the root meaning 'listening.' It later acquired a technical meaning and is used to describe the rhythmic marriage of music and dance to enhance the mystical experience and to achieve spiritual ecstasy. The so-called "whirling dervishes" of the Mevlevi movement in Turkey are its most famous exponents.

⁹⁴³ "proportion" (*tanāsub*): from Ar. meaning "proportion, balance, symmetry, harmony of parts," etc.

the human soul. For, he says a human being can love his own species, but how can he love that which is not of his species or that which bears no resemblance to him? Therefore, in his view, no love can come into existence in the soul save the love for the created; if love for the Creator comes into existence, according to the analogous fancy, it would be false. For this reason, he says that music is an amusement or the love for the created, and both of these are censured in religion.

If he is asked: "What is the meaning of the love for God Most High that is obligatory upon mankind?" he replies: "Obedience and devotion." But, this is a great error into which these people have fallen. We shall make that clear in the chapter on Love in *The Deliverers*.⁹⁴⁴

However, we say here that (the position of) music (with respect to the Law) must be judged by the soul, for music does not bring anything to the soul that is not there. Instead, it excites that which is already in it. Whoever has anything in his soul of truth—which is loved by the Religious Law and the nourishing of which is considered desirable—and he is a seeker of that, since music enhances it, it has spiritual reward for him. However, whoever has the false in his soul—which is censured by the Religious Law—will be punished for (listening to) music. And whoever has a soul devoid of either of these (conditions mentioned above), but listens to music for amusement and derives pleasure from it according to his nature, his listening is permissible.

Therefore, listening to music is of three kinds:

THE FIRST KIND is listening to it negligently, in the form of an amusement. This is the work of the heedless; the world (for them) is play and amusement, and (music) is one of these. It is not right that music be considered forbidden because it is pleasant, for pleasant things are not forbidden. Pleasant things which are held to be unlawful are so deemed not because they are pleasant. Rather, they are forbidden because they are deleterious and corrupting. The songs of birds are pleasing, but not forbidden. Vegetation, flowing water, and admiring the blossoms of flowers are pleasant, but not forbidden. Consequently, a beautiful sound is the same to the ear as greenery, flowing water, and blossoms are to the eye, or the smell of musk to the nose, or good-tasting food to the taste, or good wisdom to the mind. For each one of these senses there is a kind of pleasure. Why should it be unlawful?

The reasoning by which pleasant things, play, and watching them are not forbidden is that 'Ayishah (R) relates: "On the Day of the Festival the blacks were playing in the mosque. The Messenger (S) asked me: 'Dost thou want to see it?' I said: 'I do.' He stood by the door, his

⁹⁴⁴ The Fourth Pillar, Chapter Nine.

hand held out so that I could place my chin on his hand. I watched so much that he asked me several times: 'Is that not enough?' I said: 'No.'"

This Tradition is found in the *Sahih*.⁹⁴⁵ From it, five concessions become apparent:

FIRST, that occasional play and amusement, and the watching of them, are not forbidden, for in the play of the blacks, there was dancing and singing.

SECOND, that it took place in a mosque.

THIRD, that it is related in the Traditions that when the Messenger (S) took 'Ayishah there, he said: "Go and play!" This was a command; therefore, if it were forbidden, why did he command it?

FOURTH, that at first he asked 'Ayishah: "Dost thou want to see it?" This is a request. It was not as though if she were watching, he had remained silent. It would be right for a person to say: "He did not want to make her unhappy, which would have been ill-natured!"

FIFTH, that he himself stood with 'Ayishah (R) a long time, even though he was not interested in watching or the play. From this it is clear that it is a part of a good nature to indulge women and children in such things, so that they may be delighted. This is superior to frowning and making a display of asceticism and piety.

It is also found in the *Sahih* that 'Ayishah (R) relates: "When I was a child I used to dress a doll, as girls are accustomed to do, and several children would come to me. When the Messenger (S) would come, those girls would back away and run off. The Messenger (S) would send them back to me. One day he said to a little girl: 'What are these dolls?' She said: 'These are my daughters.' He asked: "What is that tied up among them?" She said: 'That is their horse.' He said: 'What is that on the horse?' She said: 'The feathers and wings of the horse.' He said: 'Since when do horses have wings and feathers?' She said: 'Hast thou not heard that Solomon had a horse with wings and feathers?' The Messenger (S) laughed so broadly that all of his teeth were displayed."

We have cited this so that it may be clear that being excessively pious, frowning, and refraining from things is not (a part of) religion, especially with children and with a person who likes to do such things as long as they are not repugnant. This Tradition does not imply that making pictures (of living beings) is lawful, for the dolls of children are of wood and rags and are not a complete depiction. In the Tradition, (it is said) that the wings of the horse were made of a rag.

'Ayishah also relates that: "Two girls were playing tambourines and singing on the Day of the Festival. The Messenger (S) came in and

⁹⁴⁵ This is a reference to the *Sahih* of Imam Bukhari, perhaps the most authentic and widely consulted of the six accepted collections of Traditions amongst Sunni Muslims.

lay down on his bedding, facing the other direction. Abu Bakr (R) arrived and was startled. He said: 'Satan's flute in the house of the Messenger (S)!' The Messenger said: 'O Abu Bakr, leave them alone, for it is the Day of the Festival.' Therefore, it is clear from this Tradition that playing tambourines and singing songs are not forbidden; indeed, they are permissible. There is no doubt but that the sound had reached the Messenger's (S) ears. His forbidding of Abu Bakr to stop those activities is clear proof that they are lawful.

THE SECOND KIND is that there be some blameworthy attribute in the soul, such as the person who has the love for a woman or a youth and makes music in their presence to increase pleasure; or in the hope of enjoying an absent desired one, to increase desire; or he listens to a song in which there is talk of ringlets, moles, and beauty which in his fantasy will come to him. This is forbidden, but most young people are of this kind and it is for the purpose of heating up the fire of false love. Extinguishing this fire is a duty, so how can fueling it be lawful? However, if the love he has is for his own wife or his bondmaid, it is one of the pleasures of the world and is lawful until divorce or sale. Then, it becomes unlawful.

THE THIRD KIND is that one's soul has a praiseworthy attribute which (listening to) music enhances. This is of four types:

THE FIRST TYPE is the anthems and verses of the Pilgrims describing the desert and the Ka'bah that excite the fire of yearning for the House of God in their souls. Payment for this music may be made to a person whose going on the Greater Pilgrimage is lawful. However, for the person whose parents are alive and they do not give their permission, or for some other reason that makes his Greater Pilgrimage improper, it is not permissible for him to sing these and this strengthens this hope (for performing the Pilgrimage) in his soul, unless he knows that even if his yearning (to do so) will gain strength, he will be able to listen yet stay. In this, it is close to the hymns of warriors of the faith and their music that makes people desire to go to battle and fight against the enemies of God Most High. For this, too, there may be payment. It is the same for the verses that are customarily recited in the ranks so that a man may be brave and fight and for the increase of courage. In this, there is also a reward for listening when the battle is with unbelievers. However, if (the battle) is with the People of God, it is forbidden.

THE SECOND TYPE is the dirges that bring tears and increase the sorrow in the heart. There is a reward for this, too, when the lamentations are about one's own shortcomings in being a Muslim and for the many sins of which one has been guilty, and for that which he has lost amongst the great degrees and of the pleasure of God Most High, as was the lament of David (A) who recited so many eulogies that they removed the

corpses from before him. He had a (fine) tone and a sweet voice. However, if feeling sorrow in the heart is forbidden,⁹⁴⁶ chanting a dirge is forbidden. If someone of his has died about whom God Most High says: *That ye grieve not for that which has escaped you*, (Q. 57:23) do not sorrow over the past. If a person loathes the judgment of God Most High and is sad about that and mourns to increase that sadness, it is forbidden. For this reason, payment to a mourner is forbidden, for he is in rebellion (against God). Whoever listens to him is also a rebel.

THE THIRD TYPE is that someone is happy and wishes to increase that by listening to music. This, too, is permitted as long as the joy is for something lawful, such as a wedding, the feast or ceremony of shaving the head of an infant on the sixth day after its birth, circumcision, or upon the return of the traveler, as when the Messenger (S) reached Madinah, the people came out to greet him, beating tambourines, rejoicing, and singing these verses:

*"The full moon has risen upon us from the Pass of Farewell,
Gratitude is incumbent upon us as long as the summoner
summons to God."*

In the same way, it is lawful to rejoice on the festival days and to make music for that purpose, or when friends, by agreement, sit together and eat and want to please each other. (Such) music and rejoicing, with mutual agreement, is lawful.

THE FOURTH TYPE—and the main point is this—is that for a person whose heart has been conquered by the love for God Most high to the point of passionate love, music is important. It may be that its effect be greater than many customary good works. Whatever increases the love for God has a great reward. The music of the Sufis was originally for this reason, even though now it has become muddled because of a group who appear in their external likeness, but who are internally devoid of their values. Music has a great effect in the igniting of this fire (of the love for God). There is the person among them for whom some revelation appears in the midst of the music. There are graces in music that are not found outside it.

Those sublime states, which begin to attach to them from the invisible world because of the music, are called "ecstasy." It may happen that their souls become as cleansed and purified as the silver that is placed in fire. That music throws the fire into the soul and removes its tarnishings. It may be that that which is attained through music not be attained through an abundance of self-discipline. And music activates the secret of the relationship that is between a human being and the world of

⁹⁴⁶ As in the case of the deaths of tyrants and oppressors.

spirits until it becomes possible for him to receive everything from that world to the point that he becomes unaware of all that there is in this world. His limbs may also falter and he may fall into unconsciousness.

The degree of that part of those states which is sound and genuine is tremendous. Too, the person who has faith in them and has prepared (himself) will not be deprived of their blessings. However, there are many errors in this and many mistaken ideas occur. Mature and experienced spiritual guides know the signs that distinguish the true from the false. It is not granted to a disciple to make music at his own wish just because he feels the urge to do so.

Khwajah 'Alī Hallāj⁹⁴⁷ was one of disciples of Khwajah Abu al-Qasim Gurgani. He asked permission to make music. (His guide) replied: "Eat nothing for three days. Then, after that, order some delicious dish be prepared. If thy desire for music is great and thou prefer the music over the food, then thy request for music is true and it is granted to thee." However, for the disciple in whom the states of the soul have not yet appeared, or who knows nothing of the Way save its actions, or in whom the states are found, but he has not yet severed the ties of appetite, it is incumbent upon the spiritual guide to forbid him from music, for its harm to (that person) is greater than its benefit.

Know that whoever denies music, ecstasy, and the states of the Sufis does so from his own shortcomings and he finds an excuse (for them) in that denial. For, it is difficult to believe in that which one does not have. It is like the impotent man who does not believe that there is pleasure in (sexual) intercourse. That pleasure may be found in the strength of sexuality. Since that sexuality has not been created in him, how may he understand it?

Is it strange that a blind person deny the pleasure of admiring plants and flowing water? He has not been given eyes and that pleasure can only be obtained with the eye. Is it strange that a child deny the pleasure of chieftainship, rule, command, and holding empire? He knows the way of play, what (would he know) about the management of a kingdom?

Know that people, in the denial of states of the Sufis—whether they are scholars or common folk—are like children who deny that which has not yet touched them. That person who has a little bit of sagacity admits this and says: "I do not have this state, but I realize that they have it." Indeed, he has faith in that and holds it lawful. However, that person who considers anything which he himself does not have impossible for someone else is a total fool. It is about these people that

⁹⁴⁷ Khwājah 'Alī Hallāj: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

God Most High says: *And since they will not be guided by it, they say: This is an ancient lie.* (Q. 46:11)

EXCURSUS: [WHERE LISTENING TO MUSIC IS UNLAWFUL]⁹⁴⁸

Know that though we have said that music is allowed, it becomes forbidden for five causes. One must beware of them:

THE FIRST CAUSE is hearing it from a woman or from a youth as an object of the carnal appetite. This is forbidden. For, if a person has a soul immersed in the affair of God, since the carnal appetite exists from the beginning of creation and a pleasing visage comes before his eye, Satan arises in its aid. Thus, (such) music falls into the category of carnal appetite.

The music of children not as objects of temptation is lawful, but it is not lawful from an ugly woman when one can see her. Looking at women of any description is unlawful. Moreover, even if one listens to (her) voice from behind a curtain, should there be some fear of corruption, it is forbidden. If there is no such apprehension, then it is permissible. The proof of this is that two servant girls were singing in the house of 'Ayishah (R) and the Messenger (S) doubtless heard them. Therefore, the voices of women, like the faces of the young, are not indecent. However, looking at the young with a carnal appetite—where there is fear of some corruption—is forbidden, and the same is true for (listening to) the voices of women. This is according to one's (spiritual) state. There are those who are secure in themselves, and others who fear.

And this is the same as when a person who is secure about his own carnal appetite kisses his lawful (spouse) during the month of Ramadan, while it is forbidden to the person who fears that his carnal appetite may lead him to intercourse, or who fears ejaculation from a mere kiss.

THE SECOND CAUSE is that the song be accompanied by viols, lutes, harps, or other stringed instruments, or the Iraqi flute. Stringed instruments have been prohibited, not because they are pleasing, for if a person plays with a displeasing sound and unrhythmically, they are still forbidden. (That is) because they are associated with winebibbers. Anything that is peculiar to them has been forbidden with the punishment of wine because it calls wine to mind and excites the desire for it.

However, drums, hautboys,⁹⁴⁹ tambourines—even if they have little bells—are not forbidden and no Traditions have come down to us

⁹⁴⁸ From the AA text.

about this. These are not the same as stringed instruments, as they are not part of the rites of the wine-drinkers. Consequently, an analogy cannot be made between them. Indeed, tambourines were beaten in the presence of the Messenger (S) and he ordered that they be played at weddings. By adding the bells to them, they do not become forbidden. Beating drums is itself the custom of the Pilgrims and the warriors in defense of the faith. However, the drums of the eunuchs are unlawful, for that is their emblem. It is a long drum with a narrow middle and the broad ends.

As for the hautboy, whether the bell is down or up, it is not forbidden, as it was the habit of the shepherds to play them. Shafī'i (R) says: "The proof that the hautboy is lawful is that when the sound of the hautboy came to the ears of the Messenger (S), he put his fingers in his ears and said to Ibn 'Umar: 'Listen! When it is over, let me know.' Therefore, he gave Ibn 'Umar permission to listen; that is the proof that it is lawful. However, the putting of his fingers in his ears is the proof that the Messenger (S) was in a noble and august state and he knew that its sound would distract him. For, music has an effect in the exciting of the yearning for God Most High, transporting the person closer (to God) who is not in the heart of that work. This is very important in augmenting the weak who do not have this state themselves. As for the person who has the state, it may be that music distract him and become a loss for him. Consequently, not performing music is not proof of its being forbidden, for there are many lawful things from which (people) refrain. Moreover, commanding it is absolute proof of its lawfulness, for which there is no other aspect.

THE THIRD CAUSE is that there be some obscenity in the song or satire, or that there be some sarcasm directed at the religious, such as the verses recited by the heretics with respect to the Companions. Or, it may contain the description of famous women, for describing women to men is not lawful. Reciting and listening to all of these verses is forbidden. However, it is not forbidden to recite or listen to verses describing the character of locks, moles, and beauty, or speak of union and separation, as is the custom of lovers. It becomes forbidden when a person in his own thoughts transfers it to a woman he loves or to a youth. Then, his thoughts are unlawful. But, if his own wife or slave girl sings, it is not forbidden.

As for the Sufis and those persons who are immersed in the love for God Most High and who sing about this, such verses cause no harm. They take a meaning for each one of those that is in accordance with their state. They may understand "locks" to refer to the darkness of the grave and understand the brightness of the face to refer to the brightness

⁹⁴⁹ "hautboy" (*shāhīn*): an old instrument from which the modern oboe is descended.

of faith. Or, they may understand the locks as the chain of the forms of the Divine Presence, as the poet says:

I said I would count the ends of one curl of thy hair
 So that by separating one I might estimate all;
 She laughed at me; the end of one little black curl
 She twisted once, and I lost count.

They understand the lock of hair as the chain of forms. A person who wishes to come to know the marvels of the Divine Presence by the application of reason to it or by the end of one hair, one twist will cause him to miscount and bring all of his intellectual powers to confusion. When there is talk of wine and drunkenness in poetry, it is not to be understood by its external meaning. As is said, for example:

If thou measurest wine by two thousand cups,
 So long as thou dost not drink it thyself, thou wilt not be
 seized with frenzy.

They understand from this that the work of religion will not be accomplished by talk and learning. Rather, it will be done by immediate experience. If thou talkest much about love, passion, asceticism, trust, and other such concepts, and if thou writest them in books and blacken many pages doing so, there will be no benefit until thou changest into that character. That which is said about taverns and inns, they understand differently. As is said, for example:

Whoever has not frequented the taverns is without faith,
 For the taverns are the principles of faith.

They interpret "tavern" to mean the ruin⁹⁵⁰ of the attributes of human nature. The principles of religion are that those attributes which are cultivated become destroyed so that that which is unborn in the essence of a human being may be born and cultivated.

An explanation of their understanding is lengthy, for each person has a different understanding, according to his own opinion. But the reason for saying this is that a group of fools and a group of innovators⁹⁵¹ speak about them vulgarly: "They talk about idols, locks, moles, drunkenness, and taverns and they listen (to the verses). This is forbidden!" They suppose that what they have said is in itself a great argument. Their sarcasm is iniquitous, as they have no knowledge of (the

⁹⁵⁰ A play on words: *Kharābāt* may mean "ruins" or "tavern, a house of ill repute." The Arabic root *kh-r-b* means "ruin, destruction." A tavern (*kharābāt*) is a place of ruination.

⁹⁵¹ "innovators" (*mubtadiʿān*); or, "heretics."

Sufis') state. Rather, (the Sufis') song itself does not reside in the literal meaning of the verse, which is merely a sound, for they are affected by listening to the sound of the hautboy, even though it has no meaning. It is for this reason that those persons who do not know Arabic are affected by listening to Arabic verses. The fools laugh: "He himself does not know Arabic! What is he going into a trance about?" These fools do not even know this much, that a camel does not understand Arabic, but it happens that because of the tone and singing of the Arab, though it is tired, it will run while carrying a heavy burden so that it will reach the destination by reason of the strength from the music and its energy. When the music stops, it will fall dead at that very instant. These fools should argue and exchange views with that camel: "Thou dost not know Arabic! What is this joy that has appeared in thee?"⁹⁵²

It may also be that one understands something of the Arabic verses that are not their meaning, but what one imagines them to be. Their object is not a commentary on the verses. Someone used to say: "Why art thou doing this when thou thyself do not know what they are saying?" The other replied: "What dost thou mean I do not know? He is saying: 'We are wretched.' He is speaking the truth. We are all wretched. We are helpless. We are in danger."

So, let their music be thus. Whoever's soul has been dominated and overcome by some affair—whatever he listens to, all he hears is that; whatever he sees, all he sees is that. A person who has never experienced the fire of love, whether true or false, will not comprehend this.

THE FOURTH REASON is that the listener be young and dominated by carnal passion, not knowing what the love for God itself is. Usually when he hears talk of locks, moles, and beautiful faces, Satan places his foot on his neck and excites his lust and makes the love of the beautiful attractive to his heart. He listens to the states of lovers and he, too, is delighted by them and entertains hopes and gets up in search of that until he too embarks upon the way of love.

There are many women and men in the garb of the Sufis who have become engaged in this work. Then they excuse themselves for this with the language and the fashion of idle talk, saying: "So-and-so has been seized with love and passion; a leaf has fallen in his path." And they say: "Love is the net of God; he has been caught in the net." And they say: "Holding back one's heart and striving to see one's beloved is a great blessing." They call pimping elegance and good-naturedness. They call sin and sodomy passion and love. It may be that they are making excuses for themselves: "Our spiritual guide looks favorably upon such-

⁹⁵² "Thou dost not...appeared in thee?" These sentences are, of course, written in sarcasm.

and-such a boy; this always happens in the way of the great. It is not sodomy, for it is play with the beautiful." It may be that they say: "It is the essence of soul-play." They again propose this kind of humbug together so as to conceal their own degradation with such nonsense. Whoever does not believe that this is forbidden and sinful is a libertine. (Shedding) his blood is lawful.

Whatever has been related about spiritual guides who admired boys is either a lie or self-justification. If one has looked (upon a boy), it was not out of carnal lust. Rather, it was in the way of a person who looks at a red apple or a blossom. Or, it may be that even a spiritual guide has made a mistake and is not chaste. Should a spiritual guide be in error or commit a sin, that sin is (still) not permissible.

They have related a tale and a story about David⁹⁵³ (A) in this vein so that thou not think that no one is safe from such minor sins, even if he be great. His eulogizing, weeping, and repentance have been related so that thou *not* cite (his sin) as a proof and excuse for thyself.

There is another reason—and it is rare—that there be the person to whom, when he is in that state which the Sufis have, things are shown. It may be that angelic essences and the spirits of the prophets be disclosed to them by a representation. Then, that disclosure is in a human form of extreme beauty, so that the representation will certainly be suited to the true nature of the sublime reality. Since that reality is the most perfect—amongst the sublime realities of the souls—its representation from (the viewpoint of) the visible world is the most beautiful.

Amongst the Arabs, there was no one more handsome than Dihyah Kalbi⁹⁵⁴ and the Messenger (S) used to see Gabriel in his likeness. So, it may be that something of that (kind) may be disclosed in the form of a handsome youth and that he be very pleasing. When one returns from that state, the sublime reality is again veiled and one begins to fall into a yearning and search for the sublime reality of which that form was the representation. It may be that he not find that sublime reality again. Then, if one's external eye falls upon a handsome face that has some resemblance to that (lost) form, the state is revived in one, and

⁹⁵³ This perhaps a reference to the story of the sin of David and Bathsheba found in the Bible (2 Sam. 11:1-27). However, if the comment is taken as following directly from the preceding paragraph, it may refer to the oath of brotherly love between David and Jonathan, the son of Saul, although there is nothing to suggest that it was tainted by any impropriety. In his lament at the death of Jonathan, David says (quite openly): "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." (2 Sam 1:26) The simple anguish expressed in this verse, not unusual for its time, may have offered some cause for speculation in later times.

⁹⁵⁴ Dihyah Kalbi: Dihyah bin Khalifah al-Kalbi, one of the Companions. He carried the Prophet's letter to Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor, inviting him to Islam.

one regains that sublime reality that had been lost. Then, one is overcome by an ecstatic state.

Therefore, it is lawful that a person show a desire to see that handsome face in order to regain that state. However, the person who has no knowledge of these mysteries, when he sees (the other's) desire (to gaze upon the handsome face), he thinks that (that person) is doing so for a reason of the same nature as he would have, for he himself has no knowledge of the other. In summary, the work of the Sufis is a great work of awareness and is extremely obscure. Upon no path are so many errors found as upon this one.

This much has been mentioned in order to make plain that (true Sufis) are oppressed when people think that they are of the nature of those (Sufis) who have appeared in this era. In truth, that person is oppressed who thinks like this, for he has oppressed himself by impugning them or comparing them with others.

THE FIFTH REASON is that the common folk become accustomed to music in the manner of a pleasure and an amusement, and this is permitted, but on the condition that they not make it a vocation, and that they take care that though many sins are minor, when they are many, they reach the level of a major sin. Some things are permitted, provided that they are occasional and few. When they become many, they become forbidden. The blacks played one time in a mosque and the Prophet (S) did not forbid that, but if they had converted the mosque into a theater, he would have forbidden that. He did not stop 'Ayishah from watching them, but if a person makes it a vocation to go about with them, it is not lawful. Making jokes from time to time is lawful, but if a person habitually does this, he becomes an object of ridicule and this is inappropriate.

PART TWO: CONCERNING THE EFFECTS OF MUSIC AND ITS RULES OF CONDUCT

Know that there are three stations in music: first, understanding; second, ecstasy; and third, motion. There is something to be said about each one:

THE FIRST STATION concerns understanding. As for the person who participates in the music naturally and heedlessly, or out of some thought for some creature, he is more despicable than that one should discuss his understanding and state.

As for him who usually thinks about religion and the love of God Most High, there are two degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is the disciple whose states vary in the search and traversing of his path—from grasping and letting go, ease and

difficulty, and the indications of acceptance and the indications of rejection. His whole soul may have become occupied with that. When he hears words in which there is talk of rebuke and acceptance, union and separation, proximity and distance, satisfaction and discontent, hope and hopelessness, security and fear, keeping one's word and breaking it, the happiness of attainment and the sorrow of separation—and things of this sort—he applies them to his own states. That which is inside him catches fire. Different states appear in him and he falls into various thoughts. If the basis of his knowledge and belief be not firm, it may happen that the thoughts of unbelief occur to him during the music, because he sings something about God, may He be glorified, which is absurd. As, for example, in this couplet:

From the beginning, there was an inclination to Thine I-ness;
 where is that inclination?
 And what is the reason for becoming wearied today?

Every disciple who is sharp and fluent in the beginning and then weakens supposes that God had had a care and inclination towards him but has now changed. To consider that change as being in God Most High is unbelief. Indeed, he must understand that God is not affected by change, for He is the Changer and is not subject to change. He must understand that his own character changes until that sublime reality which had been open (to him) becomes veiled. It is like the sun, whose light is lavished generously (upon one), unless he goes behind a wall and thereby becomes hidden from it. The change is in him, not in the sun. He should say:

The sun has risen, O beloved! It is late
 If it does not shine upon my head, it is a misfortune.

He should attribute the veil to his own misfortune and an error he has committed, not to God Most High. The point of this simile is that one must understand that whatever qualities of deficiency and alteration there are, are one's own and in one's own self. One should understand that whatever majesty and beauty there is in existence is in God Most High. If one does not have this capital of knowledge, one quickly falls into unbelief and does not realize it. For this reason, the danger of music to one's love of God Most High is tremendous.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that when one has passed the level of the disciples and has put the states and preliminaries behind him, he will have reached the end of that state which is called "annihilation" or "non-

existence"⁹⁵⁵ when applied to everything save God. When applied to God is it called "Unity" and "Oneness."⁹⁵⁶ The listening to music by this person is not in the way of understanding the sublime reality. Rather, when the music touches him, that state of non-existence and oneness is renewed. He becomes completely absent from himself and unaware of this world. He might, for example, fall into a fire and not realize it, just as Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Nuri (R) danced during the music to a place where reeds were cut from a field. His feet were all cut up and slashed, but he was unaware of it. His dance was more fulfilling.

However, the dance of the disciples is mixed with the attributes of humanity. This is that it takes him back totally from himself, as was the case with the women when they saw Joseph (A). They all forgot themselves and cut their hands. Thou shouldst not deny this non-existence and (as a result) say: "I see him."⁹⁵⁷ How has he become non-existent?" That which thou seest is not he! For, thou wilt still see that person when he dies, though he has become non-existent.⁹⁵⁸ The truth is that that reality is sublime, at the level of spiritual knowledge. However, since the knowledge of all things has left him, everything has become nothing for him. Since he is also unaware of himself, with respect to himself, he has become non-existent and nothing remains save the remembrance of God Most High. Everything that was perishable has departed; the eternal remains.

Therefore, the meaning of oneness is that since one sees naught but God Most High, one says: "The self is all He and I am not." Or one says: "I myself am He!" Some people make a mistake here and have interpreted this as incarnation⁹⁵⁹ and others have interpreted this as union.⁹⁶⁰ It is as though a person has never seen a mirror. He looks into one and sees his own face! He supposes that he has alighted in the mirror and that he himself is that which appears red and white. If he thinks that he has entered the image, that is incarnation. If he thinks that the image itself has become his form, that is union. Both are erroneous. On the contrary, the image never becomes the form and the form never becomes the image—but it seems so—and a person who has not come to know matters completely (erroneously) supposes (that the image has become his form). The discussion of this in a book such as this is difficult, for the study of this is lengthy.

⁹⁵⁵ "annihilation": Ar. *fanā*; "non-existence": Per. *nistī*. They are virtually synonymous.

⁹⁵⁶ "Unity": Ar. *Tawhīd*; "Oneness": Per. *Yagānagī*. They are virtually synonymous.

⁹⁵⁷ "him": the person in the state of annihilation to himself, but visible to the world.

⁹⁵⁸ That is, you see his body. You still see the body when he dies, but he is non-existent. The essential component, his soul, has departed.

⁹⁵⁹ "incarnation": *ḥulūl*.

⁹⁶⁰ "union": *ittiḥād*.

THE SECOND STATION is a state that manifests itself after one has mastered understanding. It is called "ecstasy."⁹⁶¹ Ecstasy is finding. That means that one has found a state which he has not had before. There has been much said about what the true nature of that state is. The correct view is that it is not of a single kind. Rather, it is of many different kinds. However, there are two categories: one is of the category of states and the other is of the category of revelations:

AS FOR THE STATES,⁹⁶² it is as though one of one's attributes conquers one and one becomes as though drunk. That attribute is sometimes intense yearning, sometimes fear, sometimes the fire of love, sometimes the quest, sometimes a kind of sorrow, and sometimes a kind of regret. But, when that fire conquers the soul, its smoke overcomes the brain. One's senses are overwhelmed. As a result, one does not see or hear, as though one were asleep. Or, if one sees and hears, one is absent and unheeding as though one were drunk.

THE OTHER KIND IS REVELATIONS.⁹⁶³ These begin to appear—of those that the Sufis have—some in the garb of an allegory, others direct. The effect of the whirling dance on that person is of the nature of a purification of the soul, like the cleaning of a mirror that has dust on it. The image in it then appears.

Everything that may be interpreted in this sublime reality is a knowledge, an analogy, a metaphor. Its true nature is not known to anyone other than to him who experiences it. Then, one's own station is manifest to every person. If he affects another, he does it by the analogy to his own station. Whatever is by analogy is a leaf of knowledge, not a leaf of personal experience.

So, this much has been said so that those persons who have not experienced this state may indeed believe in it and not deny it. For, that denial causes one loss. The person is extremely foolish who thinks that whatever he does not find in his own cupboard cannot be found in the treasury of kings. More foolish is that person who—despite his own triviality—considers himself a king and says: "I myself have attained everything and all has become mine. Whatever is not mine, is itself non-existent." All denials arise from these two types of foolishness.

Know that there is an ecstasy which is forced. It is the essence of hypocrisy, unless the reasons for it are to bring the soul forward by exertion so that the reality of ecstasy may appear. In the Traditions, it is related: "When ye hear the Quran recited, weep. If weeping does not come, exert yourselves." The significance of this is that one brings

⁹⁶¹ "ecstasy": *wajd*.

⁹⁶² "states": *aḥwāl*.

⁹⁶³ "revelations": *mukāshafāt*. These are of a different and lower order than the revelations from God to a prophet, which are called *wahy*.

sorrow to the heart through exertion. This exertion has an effect and it may lead to truth.

QUESTION: If someone asks: "Since their whirling dance is truth and for God, reciters of the Quran should be seated in the assemblies and recite the Quran, not the professional singers⁹⁶⁴ who sing songs, for the Quran is the Word of God. Yet the whirling dance takes precedence."

ANSWER: Much of the whirling dance is accompanied by the verses of the Quran, and ecstasy often appears from that. It often happens that (the dancers) faint from the whirling dance of the Quran. There have been many who have given up their lives in that dance. Relating that story would be lengthy, and we have related them in detail in the book, *The Revival*. However, the reasons for replacing the reciter of the Quran with the singer and replacing the Quran with song are five:

THE FIRST (REASON) is that not all of the verses of the Quran are related to the state of lovers, for in the Quran, there are the stories of the unbelievers, the judgment on the actions of the worldly, and many other things. For, the Quran is the remedy for all classes of people. When the reciter, for example, recites this verse: "A mother has one-sixth part of an inheritance and a sister one-half," or "If a woman's husband dies she must wait for a period of four months and ten days,"—and there are many things like this—the fire of love is not also kindled in the lover, except for that person who is at the highest level of love and for whom there is a dance for everything, even if the intention (of the verses) is remote (from this); but that is exceptional.

THE SECOND REASON is that they have memorized much of the Quran and recited it frequently. Whatever is heard frequently will not inform the soul more in most conditions. Or, a verse which a person hears for the first time and achieves some state from, the second time that state is not present. A song may be repeated nine times, but the Quran cannot be read nine times. When the Arabs came during the time of the Messenger (S) and heard the Quran for the first time, they would weep and states would appear upon them. Abu Bakr (R) used to say: "*We were as ye were, then our hearts hardened.* We, too, were like you; now our hearts are hard." That is, he had become firm with the Quran and it had become a habit. Thus, whatever is new has a greater effect. It is for this that 'Umar (R) ordered the Pilgrim to return to his own land quickly. He said: "I fear that when they become familiar with the Ka'bah, suddenly their respect for it will depart from their hearts."

THE THIRD REASON is that most souls will not be swayed until excited by sweet tunes and rhythm. It is for this that whirling dance seldom occurs with speech. Rather, it occurs with a pleasing song, for it

⁹⁶⁴ "singers": *qawwālān*, sing. *qawwāl*.

has rhythm and tone. Then, each melody or tune has (its own) effect. It is not proper to put the Quran into song, set it to music, or alter it. And since it is without tune, it resembles plain speech, except if a flame be hot and it burns with that.

THE FOURTH REASON is that the tune also must be given some assistance with other voices, such as flutes, tambourines, hautboys, drums, et al., to increase the effect. This has the form of an amusement, while the Quran is the essence of seriousness. It must be protected from being linked with anything that, in the view of the common folk, has the appearance of jocularity. The Messenger (S) went to the house of Rubayya' the daughter of Mu'awwidh. The servant girls were striking tambourines and singing. When they saw him, they began to sing his praise in verses. He said: "Stop that! Sing what ye were singing before." For, praising him is the essence of seriousness and more precious than that they sing it to the accompaniment of tambourines. This has the appearance of an amusement and is not appropriate.

THE FIFTH REASON is that for each person there is a condition that is eager to hear a verse suited to his own state. If it is not, it is repugnant to him and he may say: "Do not sing that, sing something else." It is not proper to put the Quran in such a situation that it appears displeasing. It may be that all of its verses are not suited to everyone. Therefore, if the couplet is not agreeable to one, one may interpret it in conformity to one's own state. It is not necessary that one understand from the poetry that which the poet had intended. However, it is not proper that thou interpret the Quran according to thine own whim and alter the meaning of the Quran.

Therefore, the reason for the choice of the singer by the shaykhs was this that has been said, and the result of this circumstance for two reasons: one is the weakness of the listener, and the other is honoring the sanctity of the Quran so that it not be touched by alteration and speculation.

THE THIRD STATION is that the whirling dance⁹⁶⁵ is motion, dancing, and rending of garments. One is not held culpable for whatever overcomes one and is spontaneous. Whatever (a person) does knowingly to show off to people untruthfully that he has attained a state which he does not have is forbidden. This is pure hypocrisy.

Abu al-Qasim Nasrabadi⁹⁶⁶ says: "It is better for these people to be busy with the whirling dance than to be backbiting." Abu 'Amr bin

⁹⁶⁵ "whirling dance": *samāʿ*. See Note 942 above.

⁹⁶⁶ Abu al-Qasim Nasrabadi: Abū al-Qāsim Ibrāhīm bin Muḥammad bin Maḥmūd al-Naṣrābādī. A disciple of Shibli (see Note 1067), he was a 4th Islamic (10th CE) century master of the later shaykhs of Khorasan.

Nujayd⁹⁶⁷ said: "If they backbite for thirty years, it is better than their displaying a false state in the whirling dance."

Know that it is more perfect that one attend the whirling dance and remain still, so that it does not appear on one's exterior and that one has such strength that one can restrain oneself, for that movement and those cries and sobs are all from weakness. However, such strength is rare.

Indeed, the meaning of that which Abu Bakr (R) said: "*We were as ye were, then our hearts hardened*" is that (they were) hardened with strength, so that "we have the power to restrain ourselves." That person who cannot restrain himself will necessarily never reach (the stage) in which his exterior does not alter and he may restrain himself.

A young man was in the company of Junayd (R). When he attended the whirling dance, he cried out. Junayd said: "If thou doest that again thou wilt not remain with me." So, with a great effort, he remained calm until one day he had restrained himself so much that he had no more power (to do so). Finally, he cried out, his belly split open, and he received the command.⁹⁶⁸

If a person does not exhibit a state by himself and dances until he forces himself into weeping, it is lawful. The dance which the blacks in the mosque were dancing when 'Ayishah was watching is permissible.

The Messenger (S) said to 'Ali: "Thou art of me and I am of thee." 'Ali was delighted and danced, striking his feet on the ground several times as is the custom of the Arabs when they are overjoyed and happy. He said to Ja'far (R): "Thou resemblest me in appearance and temperament." He, too, danced with joy. He said to Zayd bin Harithah: "Thou art our brother and client,"⁹⁶⁹ and he danced with joy.

If someone says that (dancing) is forbidden, he errs. Indeed, the worst of this is that it is play, and playing is not forbidden. And as for the person who does it in order to strengthen that state which appears in his soul, that is in itself praiseworthy.

Tearing one's clothes deliberately is not proper as it is a waste of property. However, when one is overcome (by the state), it is permissible, however much the tearing of clothing may be deliberate. But, it is possible that in that (state), the will be compelled so much that if one does not want to do it, one cannot (restrain oneself). The moans of

⁹⁶⁷ Abū 'Amr bin Nujayd: a disciple of Abū 'Uthmān al-Hirī, he was the maternal grandfather and teacher of Abū 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad bin al-Husayn al-Azdi al-Sulami al-Nishaburi. He died AH366/976CE.

⁹⁶⁸ That is, he died.

⁹⁶⁹ Ja'far (bin Abi Talib): a cousin of the Prophet (S). Zayd bin Harithah: Sold into slavery as a child, he was bought by Khadijah, the wife of the Prophet, and given to him. The Prophet manumitted him and was very fond of him. Both men were martyred in the battle of Mu'tah. AH8/629CE.

the sick person are voluntary, but if he wishes not to do so, he cannot. A person cannot restrain himself at all times from everything that is voluntary and deliberate, for when he is overcome, he cannot be restrained.

As for the deliberate tearing to pieces of garments by the Sufis and distributing the pieces, there are some who have opposed this (saying) that it is not appropriate and it is an error. Yet, heavy cloth is also cut into pieces in order to make shirts, but since there is no loss and the cloth is cut up for a purpose, it is lawful. It is the same with making the pieces square. That is done for a purpose so that all may have a part of it, and sewing it upon prayer rugs and a garment is lawful. If a person cuts a piece of cloth into a hundred pieces and gives one to (each of) a hundred poor people, it is permissible, when each piece is (so cut as) to be of use.

THE RULES OF THE CONDUCT OF THE WHIRLING DANCE

Know that three things must be observed during the whirling dance: the time, the place, and the brethren:

Any **TIME** the soul is engaged, or it is the time for an obligatory formal prayer, or it is the time for a meal, or at a time when the soul is distracted for some reason, the whirling dance is useless.

As for the **PLACE**, if it is a place of public passage, or an unpleasant and dark place, or the house of an unjust person, it will always be distracted.

As for the **BRETHREN**, it is that all who are present must be devotees of the whirling dance. If some arrogant, worldly person be present, or a disapproving holy man be present at the assembly, or a dissimulator who always dissimulates in his state and dance; or if some of the heedless be present whose dancing is based upon false ideas or who are busy with senseless talk and staring everywhere without respect; or some women who come to watch—and among them there are young persons whose thoughts are not devoid of each other—such dancing will lead to nothing. This is the meaning of what Junayd has said: "In the whirling dance, the time, the place, and the brethren are the conditions."

As for sitting in a place where the young women are visible and there are young men—of the heedless who are overcome by carnal appetite—it is forbidden, because at this time the dance heats up the fire of carnal appetite from both sides. Whoever looks at some spot with a carnal appetite, it may be that his soul is also attracted. That becomes the seed of much sin and corruption. Such a whirling dance is never proper.

Therefore, when the people who are its devotees sit for the dance, the first rule is that they bow their heads and not look at one another. Each person devotes his entire self to (the dance) and does not speak during it, nor does he drink water. He does not look from side to

side and he does not move his hands and head. He makes no deliberate movement. Indeed, he sits politely, just as he sits at the Testimony in formal prayer.⁹⁷⁰ His soul is with God Most High and he waits for whatever revelations appear from the unseen because of the dance. He restrains himself from rising deliberately and making movements.

When a person rises due to the assaults of ecstasy, they accompany him. If his turban falls off, they lay aside theirs. All of this, though it is innovation and has not been handed down from the Companions or the Followers, yet it is not such an innovation as to be inappropriate, for many innovations are good. Shafi'i (R) says: "Performing the night formal prayer⁹⁷¹ during Ramadan congregationally was instituted by 'Umar bin Khattab (R). This innovation is good." So, objectionable innovations are those which are in opposition to a Practice (of the Prophet). A pleasing temperament and making people happy is praiseworthy in the Law. For every people there is a custom, the opposition to which is considered by them to be ill nature (in its opponents') character. The Messenger (S) said: "*People have been created according to their natures.*" Ye live with every person according to his habits and nature. When these people are made happy by this agreement, they are driven away from opposition to this. Being agreeable to them is a Practice of the Prophet). The Companions did not rise to their feet for the Messenger (S), because he disliked that. But, in the place where it is the custom, where not rising is frowned upon, rising to please is preferable. The custom of the Arabs is one thing; the custom of the non-Arabs is another.

⁹⁷⁰ That is, he sits quietly upon his heels without moving, as he does at the conclusion of formal prayer.

⁹⁷¹ "night formal prayer": *tarāwīḥ*.

CHAPTER NINE: ENJOINING GOOD AND PROHIBITING WRONG

This is a pivot of the pivots of religion because all of the prophets were sent with this. Should it become obliterated and depart from mankind, all the characteristics of the Religious Law would become nullified.

We shall explain the knowledge of this in three parts: First, concerning Its Necessity; Second, concerning the Prerequisites of Safeguarding Public Morality; Third, concerning Wrong Deeds, most of which are of Habit.

PART ONE: CONCERNING ITS NECESSITY

Know that enjoining good⁹⁷² and prohibiting wrong⁹⁷³ is a duty. Whoever abandons this in an untimely manner without justification is a rebel (against God), as God Most High says: *And let there be from you a nation who invite to goodness and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency.* (Q. 3:104) He commands and He says: "There must be a group of you whose work it is that they invite people to goodness and enjoin the good and restrain the wrong." This is the proof that (doing) this is a religious obligation, but it is a collective obligation; for when a group sets out to do this, it is sufficient⁹⁷⁴ (to fulfill the obligation). However, if they do not, all the people become sinners. And He says: *Those who, if We give them power in the land, establish worship and pay the poor-tax and enjoin kindness and forbid iniquity.* (Q. 22:41) (In this verse), He placed enjoining good together with formal prayer and paying the poor-tax, and He mentioned the religious as having those qualities.

The Messenger (S) said: "Enjoin that which is good; if ye do not, God Most High will appoint the worst of you over you and give him power. Then, if even the best of you supplicates (God), He will not hear that." (Abu Bakr) the Truly Righteous (R) relates that the Messenger (S) said: "There is no people among whom sin is current, and its rejection not, to whom God Most High is not about to send a punishment upon all." The Messenger (S) said: "All good deeds when compared with

⁹⁷² "enjoining good": *amr-i ma'rūf*.

⁹⁷³ "prohibiting wrong": *nahy-yi munkar*.

⁹⁷⁴ "sufficient" (Ar *kifāyat*): *fard-i kifāyat* literally means "religious obligation of sufficiency." It is a general obligation for the community and can be transferred from one person to another, not an individual obligation (*fard-i 'ayn*), which normally cannot be performed by another, such as fasting and formal prayer. However, if no one undertakes the collective obligation, the whole community becomes guilty of neglecting a command of God.

fighting in defense of Islam are like a drop of water in a vast sea. And it is like that when comparing fighting in defense of Islam with enjoining the good and forbidding the evil." And he (S) said: "All the words that a person speaks are against him save those he utters in enjoining good and prohibiting evil, and in the remembrance of God Most High."

And he (S) said: "God Most High does not punish the guiltless elite because of the common folk except in the case where they see some evil which they are able to prevent, yet remain silent." And he (S) said: "Do not stand at a place where a person is killed or beaten unjustly, for curses rain down upon the person who witnesses that and is able to prevent it, but does not." And he (S) said: "One ought not to remain at a place where something improper is taking place without intervening. For, that intervention⁹⁷⁵ does not bring his destiny any closer, nor does it decrease his sustenance." The proof of this is that in the habitations of the unjust and places where there is evil—and it is not possible to interdict it—it is not right to intervene without necessity. It was for this reason that many of the forefathers took to seclusion, as they did not find the markets and highways free from wrong.

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever is present when a sin is committed and loathes it, it is as though he were absent. If it takes place in his absence and he agrees to it, then it as though it were done in his presence." And he (S) said: "There was never a messenger (from God) who did not have disciples—that is, Companions—who did not do his work after him with the Book of God and Practice (of the Prophet) until the time after them that some people appeared who mounted the pulpits and spoke fine words, but committed filthy deeds. It is the right and religious obligation incumbent upon every believer to fight against them by hand; if one is not able, then in words. And if one is not able, in his heart; there is no Islam beyond this." And he (S) said: "God Most High sent a revelation to an angel: 'Overturn such-and-such a city.' (The angel) said: 'O Lord God, how can I do this when such-and-such a

⁹⁷⁵ "intervention": *hisbat*: This word comes from an Arabic root *h-s-b* meaning "accounting, counting," etc. It came to refer to virtuous acts in this life which would add to the count of spiritual rewards in the next life. Forbidding or speaking out against wrongdoing or acts contrary to public morality were among the virtuous deeds that would add to spiritual merit. This became institutionalized with the Arab conquests in the 1st Islamic (7th CE) century of the formerly Byzantine territories of Egypt, Syria (including Palestine), and Iraq. The Umayyad Arabs took over the Byzantine market inspector, calling him *ʿāmil al-sūq* (prefect of the market). "At a later stage he was entrusted with the peculiarly Islamic function of *hisba*, or the duty of safeguarding the proper standards of public morality." (N. J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, Vol. 2 of *Islamic Surveys*, [Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1964] p. 28.) This officer was now called *muhtasib*, the guardian of public morality, his function *ihtisāb*, the guardianship of public morality. This function is still carried out with official sanction, in a somewhat different form, in several Muslim countries, notably Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Afghanistan.

person who has never committed a sin by even a winking of the eye is in there.' (God) said: 'Do it, for he never once frowned at the sins of others.'"

'Ayishah (R) relates: "The Messenger (S) said: 'God punishes all the inhabitants of a land in which there were 17,000 men whose deeds were like the deeds of the prophets.' They asked: 'Why, O Messenger of God?' He said: "Because they were not angry at others for the sake of God Most High and they did not forbid their conduct."

Abu 'Ubaydah Jarrah says: "I said to the Messenger: 'Who is superior to the martyrs?' He replied: 'The person who chastises a tyrannical ruler for lapses against public morality until (the ruler) slays him. If he is not slain, nothing more will be recorded against him, no matter how long he lives.'"

It is related in the Traditions that God Most High sent a revelation to Joshua (A) the son of Nun: "I shall destroy a hundred thousand men of thy people; forty thousand righteous men and sixty thousand sinning men." (Joshua) asked: "O Lord God, why wouldst Thou destroy the good men?" He answered: "Because they have not been inimical to the others and have not refrained from eating, associating, and doing business with them."

PART TWO: CONCERNING THE CONDITIONS OF SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC MORALITY

Know that guarding public morality⁹⁷⁶ is obligatory upon all Muslims, and knowledge of its conditions is necessary; it cannot be passed over. This guarding has four elements: one is the guard, another concerns that which is safeguarded; another is the person subject to the discipline of guardianship,⁹⁷⁷ and the last is the manner of safeguarding public morality.

THE FIRST ELEMENT is the guardian. His⁹⁷⁸ qualifications are no more than that he be a Muslim and that he be authorized. For, the guardianship implements the rights of Islam. Whoever is religious is a guardian of public morality. There is disagreement as to whether being

⁹⁷⁶ "public morality": *hisbat*. See previous Note (Note 975).

⁹⁷⁷ The second and third elements are reversed in both texts at my disposal. I have taken the liberty of reversing them in accordance with their order in the text that follows.

⁹⁷⁸ We must remind the reader that the pronouns "his" and "he," etc. are employed according to the rule of the indefinite masculine used as a singular to represent either sex when sex is not specified, as noted in the Translator's Introduction. Persian pronouns do not specify sex and when the specification is necessary other phrases are used such as "that/this man, that/this woman," etc. Arabic pronouns, however, are either masculine or feminine in form, as in English.

just and an appointment by a ruler are conditions or not. In our opinion, the correct view is that they are not.

AS FOR JUSTICE AND CHASTITY: How can being just and chaste be prerequisites? If someone is to guard the public morality who has never sinned, the guardianship itself will never be carried out, for no one is entirely innocent. Sa'id bin Jubayr (R) says: "If we must execute the guardianship only when we have not sinned, then we shall never be able to do so." Hasan Basri (R) was told: "A person says: 'Do not summon the people (to God) before ye first purify yourselves completely.'" (Hasan then) said: "Satan is in the hope of nothing more than that he be able to insert such words into our hearts so as to shut the gate of safeguarding public morality."

The judgment concerning this problem is that there are two kinds of guardianship:

The first is by advice and preaching. Whoever does bad deeds (himself) and says to another: "Do not do that!" or offers guidance, has no benefit other than that he is laughed at, for his preaching will be without any (beneficial) effect. This type of guardianship is not appropriate for the sinner. Moreover, he becomes an offender because, as he knows that he will not be listened to and that he will be ridiculed, this will void the grace of preaching and the majesty of the Religious Law in the eyes of the people. This is the reason that the preaching of the learned whose sins have been exposed is injurious to the public. In this regard, the Messenger (S) said: "That night when I was carried to heaven, I saw some people whose lips were being cut with fiery nail scissors. I asked: 'Who are ye?' They answered: 'We are those who enjoin the good, but did not ourselves accomplish it. We prohibited the wrong, but we did not refrain from it.'" It was revealed to Jesus (A): "O son of Mary, first counsel thyself; if thou acceptest it, then counsel others; if not, be ashamed before Me."

The other kind of implementing the guardianship is by fist and compulsion, such as by spilling out wine, smashing harps and viols, and preventing by force someone bent upon some corruption. This is also lawful for the sinner, because there are two things obligatory upon every person: that he himself not do it, and the other is that he not permit another do it. If one (ignores this obligation), why should not another? If someone says: "It is unbecoming for some (man) who has silken garments⁹⁷⁹ to act as the guardian of public morality and tear (silken cloth) off another person; or for (a person) who himself drinks wine to pour out the wine of another." The reply to this is: "Unbecoming is one thing, invalid is another. The latter is unbecoming because it is more

⁹⁷⁹ Men are prohibited from wearing silk, but women are not, so this stipulation is meant for males.

important that it be abandoned, not because it is improper. If a person is fasting but does not perform the (obligatory) formal prayers, it is considered unbecoming. For, he does not do the more important, not because his fasting is improper and invalid; rather, because the prayer is more important." In the same way, acting is more important than commanding, but both are duties and one is not dependent upon the other. For, this leads to its being said: "One is obligated not to drink wine so long as one does not drink it." If he himself drinks, he is no longer obligated (to prevent others). This is absurd.

AS FOR THE SECOND CONDITION, seeking an appointment from the ruler and obtaining a writ for safeguarding public morality, it is not a condition. For, the great of the forefathers themselves rebuked kings and caliphs (for lapses of public morality), but the recounting of all that would be lengthy. The truth about this problem becomes clear when thou comest to know the degrees of guardianship. Guardianship has four degrees:

The first degree is advising and causing the fear of God Most High. This is itself a duty for all Muslims. What is the need of a (royal) mandate? The most meritorious of the acts of worship is that one counsel the ruler and cause him to fear God Most High.

The second degree is that of speaking sternly; to say, for example: "O sinner! Oppressor! O fool!" or: "O ignoramus! Dost thou not fear God that thou act thus?" All of these words are correct with respect to a sinner, and speaking the truth has no need of a mandate.

The third degree is physical prevention. Wine is poured out, viols smashed, silk turbans torn off heads. These are all like worship and are a duty. All that we have related in the first part is proof that whoever is a believer has been given this authority by the Religious Law, without the command of the (temporal) ruler.

The fourth degree is scourging and the threat to scourge. It may be that people oppose this and one fall into the need of help and gathering people (in support). This may lead to turmoil if done without the permission of the ruler. It is preferable that this not be done without the order of the ruler.

It is not remarkable that the degrees of guardianship alter (according to circumstance). If a son⁹⁸⁰ wants to rebuke his father (for morality), he cannot do more than offer counsel and be polite. Hasan Basri (R) says: "(The son) gives counsel. If (the parent) becomes angry, (the son) should be silent." However, saying such harsh things as "fool or ignoramus," and the like are not proper with one's father, much less beating him! It is not right to slay him, even though he be an unbeliever.

⁹⁸⁰ Or daughter. The Persian word *farzand*, like *child* in English, does not indicate gender.

In Islamic punishments, it is not proper for a son to beat his father, even if the son be an (official) whipper, so counseling is preferred. But, if it is possible, he should pour out wine or tear apart silken garments, return things which (the father) has accepted unlawfully to their rightful owners, break silver vessels, destroy pictures on walls, or do other things like that. It would appear to be lawful even though the father is angered, for doing this is a right and the father's anger is invalid. This is not interference with the father's person, as beating and scolding would be. It is possible for a person to say: "Because one's father will become very unhappy, it should not be done." As Hasan Basri (R) says: "If he will become angry, (the son) should remain silent and refrain from preaching to him."

Know that the moral rebuke of the slave to his master, the wife to her husband, the subject to the ruler is the same as the rebuke of the offspring to his parent. These rights are all definite and tremendous. However, the rebuke of the student to his teacher is easier, for that respect is only because of religion. Since he uses the knowledge he acquires from him, it is not impossible. Indeed, the learned person who does not practice his own knowledge has lowered the respect for himself and for his knowledge.

THE SECOND ELEMENT is that which is safeguarded. Know that a moral rebuke is lawful for any reprehensible act that is occurring, of which the guardian of public morals comes to know without spying and of which its reprehensibility is certain. There are four conditions obvious from all of this:

THE FIRST CONDITION is that it be reprehensible, even though it not be a sin, and even though it be a minor sin. If one sees an insane person or a child having intercourse with a beast, one must prevent it even though it is not called a sin because they are not responsible (for their actions), but because the deed itself is forbidden in the Law and an indecency. If one sees a madman drinking wine or a child destroying someone's property, he must also be stopped. And that which is a sin, even though it be minor, must be stopped, such as exposing the privates in the public bath, or following women with one's eyes, or standing with them in private, or wearing gold rings and silk clothing, or drinking water from a silver vessel, and other similar minor sins. All of these must be opposed on moral grounds.

THE SECOND CONDITION is that the sin be occurring. If a person has finished drinking wine, it is not proper to bother him after (the event), except with counsel. The punishment of whipping is the prerogative of the ruler. In the same way, if a person is bent upon drinking wine tonight, it is not proper to punish him, for it may happen that he not drink it. If he says: "I shall not drink (wine)," it is not right to suspect him. However, if one is alone with a woman, punishment for a

breach of public morality is appropriate even if adultery has not been committed, for being alone (in that situation) is itself a sin. Indeed, if one stands by the door of the women's public bath to wait until they come out, a punishment must be given, for standing (for such a purpose) is a sin.

THE THIRD CONDITION is that the sin be visible without investigation by the guardian of public morality. Spying is not proper. When a person goes into his house and closes the door, it is not proper to enter without his permission and seek to find out what he is doing. It is not proper to eavesdrop by the door or roof to hear the sound of a stringed instrument and then punish him. Rather, everything that God Most High conceals must be kept concealed, unless the sound of the instruments and the cries of the drunkards are heard outside. Then it is proper for the guardian of public morality to enter without permission and give punishment. If a sinner has something under his garment, and it may be supposed that it is wine, it is not proper to say: "Show us what thou hast!" as this is spying. As it is possible that it is not wine, one must ignore it. However, if one smells the wine, it is lawful to pour it out. If someone has a large lyre and the cloth (under which it is concealed) is thin so that from its shape one may know what it is, it is lawful to destroy it. If it is possible that it may be something else, one must ignore it.

We have already narrated the story of 'Umar (R) who once descended to a roof and saw a person with a woman and wine in the section on laws.⁹⁸¹ It is well-known that one day, while on the pulpit, he consulted with the Companions, saying: "What do you say if the imam sees a wrong thing with his own eye, is it lawful for him to implement the punishment of whipping?" They replied: "It would be lawful." 'Ali (R) said: "This is something for which God Most High has required two witnesses. It cannot be done by one person." He did not hold it correct that the imam should act, even with his personal knowledge, and he held it a duty to conceal it.

THE FOURTH CONDITION is that it be truly obvious that the thing is improper, not suspected or by judgment. Consequently, it is not lawful in the Shafi'i school to object to the marriage of a Hanafite without a guardian, or that he drink date-wine, or that he accept the redemption of proximity,⁹⁸² and the like. However, if a Shafi'ite marries without a guardian or drinks date-wine, it is lawful to object to this, for opposition to the founder of one's own school is never permissible for any person. Some have said: "Safeguarding the public morality with regard to wine, adultery, and pork is lawful; for their prohibition is agreed upon and

⁹⁸¹ See Part Two of Chapter Five in this Pillar.

⁹⁸² Redemption of proximity (*shuf'ah-yi jiwar*): The right of redemption in favor of a person whose possessions adjoin to a property offered for sale. (Steingass)

certain, and not by expert judgment." That is not correct, for the agreement of the researchers is that whoever does something that differs from his own expert judgment, or differs from the expert judgment of the founder of his school of law, is a sinner. Therefore, this is truly forbidden. Whoever uses his own judgment in ascertaining the direction of prayer, and turns his back upon the direction (arrived at by others) and performs the formal prayer, is a sinner, even if others suppose that he is correct. And those who say that it is lawful for each person pick and choose among the schools speak nonsense and should not be trusted. Indeed, each person is required to act according to his own judgment. When his opinion is that, for example, Shafi'i (R) is more learned, he has no excuse to oppose (Shafi'i's views), except mere carnal appetite.

As for the innovating heretic⁹⁸³ who says that God has a physical body and that the Quran was created, or says that God Most High cannot be seen and the like, he should be punished (according to the rules of safeguarding public morality), even if a Hanafite or a Malikite would not do so, for the errors of these people are certain, but in religious jurisprudence an error cannot be determined to be certain (as they are opinions). However, this punishing of the heretic should be done in a country where the heretics are unusual and rare, and most of the inhabitants are of the Traditional School. If (the people) are of two groups and thou punishest the heretic, he may punish thee for a lapse in public morality too, and this may end in a riot. This is not appropriate except with an order and the power of the ruler of the time.

THE THIRD ELEMENT is the subject of the discipline (for breaches of public morality). Its condition is that he be responsible so that his (improper) actions may be considered sinful and that there be no restraint out of respect to prevent disciplining, such as the respect due a father which restrains (a son) from physical discipline or verbal abuse. However, we prevent the mad and children from indecencies, as has been said above, but that is not called "safeguarding public morality." Indeed, if we see an animal grazing in the crops of a Muslim, we stop it in order to preserve the property of Muslims. We are not required to do this unless it is easy and we ourselves do not incur any loss. But, if there is no loss or harm to ourselves, that much (to preserve) the rights of Muslims is a duty. Just as when a loss of property will be caused to another and a person has some more testimony (in that person's favor) and the distance is not great, it is incumbent upon him to go to that place (an offer testimony) on behalf of the rights of Muslims.

When a rational person ruins or wastes someone's property, it is an injustice and a sin. Even if he has some grievance, he should be

⁹⁸³ "heretic" (*mubtadi*?): or, "innovator" (in religion).

punished (for a breach of public morality). Restraining and preventing sin is not without trouble, but it must be endured out of necessity, unless that difficulty is unendurable or one is not up to it. The purpose of this disciplining is the expressing of Islamic mores; therefore, accepting trouble in this is a duty. For example, if there be a lot of wine in a place and it will exhaust a person to pour it out, it is (nonetheless) a duty. But if some sheep are eating many of the crops of Muslims and it will exhaust a person to drive them out, it is not a duty. One's own rights must be respected like the rights of others. One's life is one's right. One is not obliged to give it for the property of another. However, one is obliged to give (his life) for religion and to prevent sin.

(DETAILS OF THE CONDITIONS OF BEARING THE BURDEN
OF SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC MORALITY)

It is not a duty to endure all kinds of difficulties in guarding public morality, for there is also a qualification. That qualification is that if a person is unable, he is excused and has no obligation other than the rejection in his heart. But, if he is not unable, but rather fears that he may be beaten, or he knows that his words will have no effect, there are four situations:

ONE is that he knows that they will beat him and they will not stop sinning. He is not obliged (to act), but it is permissible to chastise them verbally or physically and endure the injuries. Moreover, this obtains spiritual reward. It is related in the Traditions that there is no martyr superior to the person who chastises a ruler (for a lapse of public morality) and is slain for that.

THE SECOND is that he knows that he is able to prevent a sin and there is no fear; he is absolutely able (to do so). If he does not, he is a rebel (against God).

THE THIRD is that they will not stop sinning and are not able to beat him. Chastising verbally is a duty in order to honor the Law. Just as he is not unable to reject (the sin) in his heart, so he is not unable to do so verbally.

THE FOURTH is that he may stop the sin, but they will beat him if he suddenly throws a stone at a jug of wine to break it, or if he strikes a harp or a viol and breaks it. This is not obligatory. Rather, rejection and being patient is better and preferable. If a person says that God Most High has said: *And be not cast by your own hands into ruin*, (Q. 2:195) the reply is that which Ibn 'Abbas (R) gives: "That (verse) means that ye should spend (of your) property so that ye not be destroyed." Bara'

'Azib⁹⁸⁴ (R) says: "The meaning of that is that ye spend and ye repent. The repentance of whoever sins and then says: 'I repent,' will not be accepted." 'Ubaydah says: "That means that he sins and never does anything good after that."

In summary, it is lawful for a Muslim to throw himself at the ranks of the unbelievers and fight until they kill him. This is throwing oneself into destruction, but there is a benefit in that for him. He too kills a person so that the unbelievers become disheartened and say: "Are all the Muslims as courageous as he?" There is a spiritual reward in that. However, it is not lawful for a blind person or a helpless person to throw himself upon the ranks of the unbelievers, for he will destroy himself uselessly.

In the same way, if the implementation of the chastisement for a breach of public morality be in a place where they will kill or torture him, without stopping (them) from their sinning, and the firmness which he displays in his faith will not dishearten the sinners and not increase anyone's desire for the good, it is also not proper to endure injury uselessly. In this rule, there are two forms:

One is that one's anxiety is from timidity and suspicion, and the other is that one is not afraid of being beaten, but is concerned about his rank, property, or the sorrow of relatives. As for the first, if one is fairly sure that he will be beaten, he is excused. If he is fairly sure that they will beat him, but there is a possibility that they will not, he will never be excused—this is a possibility and a suspicion—and does not remove the obligation to chastise. If he be in doubt, it is possible for us to say: "Acting to guard public morality is a duty and is not abrogated by (either) certainty or doubt." It may be that we say: "Acting to guard public morality becomes incumbent in a place that is usually safe."

There are other forms in which there is injury to property or one's body, or one's rank, relatives, or students; or there is the fear that one will be insulted, or there is a fear that the gates of worldly and religious usefulness be closed to one. There are many kinds of this, and for each one there is a judgment.

[FEAR OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF SAFEGUARDING
PUBLIC MORALITY FOR ONESELF]

There are two kinds of things that one may fear for oneself:

⁹⁸⁴ Bara' 'Azib: Barā' bin 'Āzib bin al-Hārith al-Awsī al-Anṣārī, a Companion of the Prophet who later conquered Rhages (modern Rayy near Tehran) and Qazwin in Iran. He was a partisan of 'Alī and retired to Kufah where he died AH72/691-2CE.

ONE (KIND) is that one fears that he may be deprived of something in the future, as in the case if he should chastise his teacher for a lapse of public morality, (the teacher) may make some omission in instructing him. If he chastises a physician for a lapse of public morality, (the physician) may omit something in curing his illness. If he chastises his master, (the master) may withhold his salary, or is some affair occurs, (the master) may not protect him. One cannot be excused (from the responsibility of safeguarding the public morality) for any of this, for this is not injurious. Indeed, this fear of losing some increase is for the future.

However, if at the time when one is needy, such as falling ill, and the doctor is wearing silk, and if one rebukes him (for that), he may not attend one; or, perhaps one is poor, helpless, and does not have the strength of resignation (to God), and there is no one other than one person who pays for one's sustenance, and if one rebukes him, he may withhold that money; or if one is helpless in the hands of a wicked person and he is the one person who protects him—these needs are immediate. It is not impossible that we allow a person with these excuses to remain silent, for the injury will appear immediately. However, the degree of injury changes with circumstances and is dependent upon one's reflection and informed judgment. One must examine one's own faith and be careful not to refrain from executing the guardianship of public morality unnecessarily.

THE SECOND KIND is that one fears that he may lose something he has obtained, such as knowing that property will be taken or his house destroyed, or he may lose the soundness of his body because they will beat him, or he may lose his rank because they will carry him out of market bareheaded,⁹⁸⁵ even if they do not beat him. In all of these situations, there is an excuse (for not acting). If, however, he fears something that does not have a major impact upon his virtue, but damages his adornment and pride, or that they speak coarse words in his face, such things are for the increase of rank and he is not relieved of the obligation (to chastise) for such reasons. Protecting such things is not praiseworthy in the Law; however, the protection of virtue is a point of the Law. Moreover, if he fears that they will slander him, or be rude to him, or become his enemy and not submit to him in matters, there is no doubt but that he is not excused (from this duty). For, there is no safeguarding of the public morality devoid of this—unless the sin be slandering and he knows that if he chastises them, they will not cease to do so, and will multiply their sinfulness. Then, being excused from acting is lawful.

⁹⁸⁵ Headgear was often a sign of rank and office.

But, if he fears for reasons connected with his family and relatives, as in the case of the ascetic who knows that he will not be beaten and has no property for them to take, but his family and relatives may be tormented as a reprisal against him; it is not appropriate for him to act to safeguard public morality. To endure (the troubles) with respect to himself is lawful, but not with respect to others. Indeed, refraining because of them is a religious duty, and that too is important.

THE FOURTH ELEMENT is the manner of safeguarding public morality. Know that there are eight steps in safeguarding public morality: learning the situation, ascertaining the culprit, giving counsel, speaking harshly, changing (behavior) by word and deed, causing fear of injury and warning, drawing weapons, and summoning supporters and rallying the public. It is necessary to observe these steps in this:

THE FIRST STEP is to learn the situation. One must first know (the sin) with certainty and recognize it truly. One must not spy, nor eavesdrop at doors, or from the roof. One must not ask neighbors. If there is something concealed under clothing, one should not touch it to see what it is. If, without spying, one hears the sound of a stringed instrument or smells the odor of wine, then one executes one's guardianship. If two just men inform him, he should accept (their testimony). It is lawful to enter a house without permission on the word of two just men. However, it is preferable not to enter on the word of one just man if the house is the property of the suspect. The right of the owner is not nullified on the word of one just person. It is said that on the ring of Luqman the Wise these words were inscribed: "Concealing that which thou hast seen with thine own eyes is better than disgracing someone on a suspicion."

THE SECOND STEP is to ascertain the culprit. It may be that someone does something and not know that it is not right, such as the villager who performs a formal prayer in the mosque and does not bow and the prostrate himself fully, or he may have some uncleanness on his footgear and, if he knew that formal prayer is not perfect with that, he would not have prayed. Therefore, he should be instructed and taught the rules with kindness so as not to cause him embarrassment, for embarrassing a Muslim unnecessarily is not appropriate. The injury to whomever you would instruct, and have called him ignorant and foolish and reminded him of his defects, cannot be endured without salve. The salve is that you remember his excuse and say: "No one is born of his mother learned. He must learn. Whoever does not know, the fault is that of his mother, his father, or his teacher. Is there no one in your region to teach you?" By these words, and the like, he is made happy. Whoever does not do this so as to vex someone, he is like the person who washes

blood from clothing with urine. Or, though wishing to perform a good deed, has done the opposite.

THE THIRD STEP is to preach and give counsel with kindness, not harshness. If the person knows that it is forbidden, then preaching and counsel will have no effect; intimidation must be employed. Kindness in that, for example, is when someone slanders another, one says: "Who amongst us has no faults? Attending to one's own faults is better." Or one should recite something about slander.

There is here a great pitfall from which one does not escape safely except that he be companionable. There are two honors for the self in giving counsel: one is to display the honor of knowledge and one's own self-restraint; the other is to display the honor of dominion, grandeur, and eminence to that person. Both of these arise from the love of rank; that is human nature. Usually (the guardian) will think that he is preaching in obedience to the Law, but in truth he is in obedience to his own appetite for rank. This is a sin that he commits that may be worse than that which the (culprit) has committed. (The guardian) must examine himself: if he prefers that person's repentance come by itself or by the counsel of someone else rather than by his counsel, and he dislikes to counsel himself; then, that he himself should be counseled is incontestable. If (his counselor) prefers that he stop, he must fear God Most High, for it is to be feared that he is calling (people) to himself with this counsel, not to God Most High.

Dawud Tayi (R) was asked: "What dost thou say about a person who, to guard public morality, goes to the king and chastises him?" He answered: "I fear that he will be whipped." They said: "He has the strength to endure that." He said: "I fear that he may be killed." They said: "He has the strength to endure that." He said: "I fear a cause which is greater and more hidden, and that is vanity." Abu Sulayman Darani (R) said: "I wanted to censure such-and-such a caliph. I knew that I would be killed, but I did not fear that. However, there were many people present. I feared that they would see me in truth and firmness and that their admiration would be pleasing in my heart. Then, I would be slain when I was not sincere."

THE FOURTH STEP is to speak harshly. There are two rules about this:

One is that one should not speak harshly so long as one is able to speak with kindness.

The other is that when speaking one should not use foul language and should utter nothing save the truth. One should not say anything more than "oppressor," "corrupter," "fool," or "ignoramus." Everyone who sins is a fool, for the Messenger (S) said: "The person is clever who takes stock of himself and looks to the Hereafter. The fool is

that person who goes in pursuit of his lusts, and deceives himself, and hopes that he will be left alone (at the Resurrection)." Harsh language becomes appropriate when one knows that it will have a good result. If he knows that it will not, he should frown, and look upon (the culprit) with contempt, and turn away from him.

THE FIFTH STEP is to change (behavior) by deed. In this, there are two rules:

One is that, as much as one can, one urge a person to change. One tells him, for example, to tear the seams of silk garments, to vacate usurped land, to pour out wine, to get off a silken carpet, and to leave the mosque if he is ritually unclean.

The second rule is that if one is not capable (to do so by words), one drive that person out. The rule of this is one should limit oneself to the least. If one can take the person by the hand and expel him, one should not grab him by the beard or foot and drag him out. When breaking a harp, it should not be into tiny pieces. Seams should be torn open slowly and the cloth not torn. One should not smash the vessel containing wine if one can pour it out. If one cannot, and the person has it in his hands, it is lawful to throw a stone at it and break it, for the right to that property is invalid. If it is a drinking glass with a narrow top so that when one is busy pouring it out, they will be able to seize him and beat him, it is lawful to smash it and flee. At the beginning of the prohibition of wine, breaking the vessels of wine was commanded, but that has been abrogated. It was also said that there were vessels which were not suitable for anything other than wine. However, now it is not proper to smash them without reason, and there is a fine for that.

THE SIXTH STEP is to threaten, as when one says: "Pour out the wine! If thou doest it not, I shall crack thy skull and I shall do this and that to thee!" This is permissible when it is necessary and kindness does not prompt him to pour it out. There are two rules for this:

One is that one not threaten something which is not lawful, to say, for example: "I shall make thy wife or child sorry." The other is that one may say what one can, so long as it is not a lie. One should not say: "I shall strike off thy head and set it on the gallows," and other lies of this sort. However, if one exaggerates a lot with the intention that (the person) will become anxious, it is permissible as a stratagem. Just as when one wants to make peace between two people, if there is an exaggeration or a diminution—in speech—it is lawful.

THE SEVENTH STEP is to beat with hand, foot, or staff. This is permissible in a time of need. A time of need is when (the culprit) will not stop sinning without being injured. However, when he has stopped, beating is not proper, for punishment after sinning is reprimand and

Islamic punishment. No one other than rulers is competent to do that. The rule of conduct for this is that beating by hand is sufficient, not with a staff, and that he should not be struck on the head. If this is not enough, it is permissible to draw a sword. If a person touches a woman and does not remove his hand except out of fear of the sword, it is lawful to draw one's sword. If there is stream between him and the guardian, he should put an arrow to his bow and say: "Stop that, or I shall shoot!" If he does not stop, it is lawful to shoot, but he should aim at the thigh or lower leg and avoid any vital spot.

THE EIGHTH STEP is, should the guardian not be enough by himself, that he rally the people to assemble and fight. It may happen that the sinner will gather a group too, leading to a brawl. Some have said: "When it is like that, it is not correct without the order of the imam; for turmoil arises, leading to corruption." Another group has said that as it is lawful for a people to go to battle against the unbelievers without the order of the imam, it is lawful to go battle against sinners and that if the guardian is slain, he is a martyr.

THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR THE GUARDIAN OF PUBLIC MORALITY

Know that the guardian of public morality must absolutely have three qualities: knowledge, piety, and a good nature. If he does not have knowledge, he will not discriminate between the bad acts and the good. If he does not have piety, even though he can discriminate (between bad and good), he will work with a bias. If he does not have a good nature, when they vex him, he will grow angry and forget God Most High and not stop upon the limits (of punishment). That which he does, he will do for his own ego, not for God, and his safeguarding of the public morality will become sinful.

It was for this that when 'Ali (R) threw down an unbeliever to slay him, and (the unbeliever) spat into Ali's face. 'Ali stayed his hand and did not slay him, saying: "I became angry. I was afraid that I would not slay him for God Most High." 'Umar (R) struck someone with a scourge and was about to strike again when that person called him a bad name. ('Umar) did not strike him again until his anger had departed. He was asked: "Why didst thou stop?" He replied: "Up to that point I was right in beating him; (but) now that he had called me names, if I beat him, it would have been with anger." And it was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "Let no one chastise for lapses) except him who knows the Law about what he is doing, is wise in what he orders and what he forbids, and is the companion in what he orders and what he

forbids.”⁹⁸⁶ Hasan Basri (R) says: “Command whatever thou wishest, but before, thou must be obedient to thine own commands and act upon them.”

This is according to the rules of conduct, but the prerequisite is that which was asked of the Messenger (S): “Should we enjoin the good and prohibit the bad, or first implement them ourselves?” He replied: “Nay, if ye have not implemented all of them yourselves, do not hold back from safeguarding public morality.”

Among the rules of safeguarding public morality is that one should be patient and offer one’s body to trouble, for God Most High says: *Enjoin the good and forbid the bad and endure that which may befall thee.* (Q. 31:17) Anyone who cannot endure trouble cannot (perform the duties of) the guardianship of public morality.

And amongst the important rules, one is that one have few attachments and little greed, for wherever greed comes, guardianship is nullified. One of the shaykhs was in the habit of taking glands from a butcher for his cat. One day, he saw an offense against morality on the part of the butcher. He returned to his home and drove out the cat; then he went to the butcher to chastise him. The butcher said: “Thou always wantest glands from me; thou cannot chastise me.” He answered: “I first drove out the ‘cat, then I came to chastise!”

Whoever wants people to like him and praise him and be happy with him, cannot perform the duties of the guardianship of public morality. Ka’b al-Ahbar said to Abu Muslim Khawlanī:⁹⁸⁷ “How is thy position amongst the people?” He replied: “Good.” (Ka’b) said: “In the Torah, it is said: ‘The position of whoever chastises on behalf of public morality is disagreeable.’” (Abu Muslim) said: “The Torah speaks the truth and Abu Muslim lies.”

Know that the foundation of safeguarding public morality is that the guardian be unhappy for that rebel (against God) who proceeds in disobedience. He looks at him with the eye of compassion. He forbids all as a person forbids his own child, and observes compassion. Someone chastised Ma’mun⁹⁸⁸ and spoke harshly to him. Ma’mun said: “O young man, God Most High has sent better than thee to worse than me and said: ‘Speak gently.’ He sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and said: ‘*And speak unto him a gentle word*’ (Q. 20:44) Speak gently so that it may

⁹⁸⁶ That is, he himself applies to himself what he orders and forbids.

⁹⁸⁷ Abu Muslim Khawlanī: Abū Muslim ‘Abdullāh bin Thuwāb al-Khawlanī, the brother of Abū Idrīs Khawlanī (see Note 822), with whom he is often confused. One of the eight Followers famous for piety, he became a Muslim either in Yemen during the lifetime of the Prophet or in Syria during the reign of Mu’awiyah (see Note 717). A forerunner of the ascetic movement, he died AH366/976CE.

⁹⁸⁸ Ma’mun: The Abbasid caliph Ma’mūn who reigned at Baghdad AH198-218/813-33CE.

happen he accept it." Indeed, one must follow the example of the Messenger who, when a youth came to him, said: "O Messenger of God, wilt thou give me permission to commit adultery?" The Companions cried out against him and made for him, but the Messenger (S) said: "Leave him alone." He called the youth to him until they sat knee to knee.⁹⁸⁹ (The Messenger) said: "Young man, dost thou consider it lawful for someone to do that with thy mother?" He replied: "No." (The Prophet) said: "Neither do people." Then he asked: "Dost thou consider it lawful for someone to do that with thy paternal or maternal aunts?" He said: "No." He asked (about female relatives) one by one, and the youth would reply: "No." Then the Messenger (S) placed his hand upon the young man's heart and said: "O Lord God, cleanse his heart and protect his chastity and forgive his sins." The young man returned from that place and nothing was more repugnant to him than adultery.

Fudayl 'Iyad was told: "Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah⁹⁹⁰ accepts robes of honor from the king." He said: "He has a greater right than that in the public treasury." Then, when he saw (Sufyan) in private, he scolded him and upbraided him. Sufyan said: "O Aba 'Ali, even if I am not counted among the righteous, I love the righteous."

Wuslah bin Ashyam⁹⁹¹ was sitting with his students. A man passed by and his loin wrapper was sweeping the ground, as was the custom with the haughty Arabs. This had been prohibited. (Wuslah's) companions wanted to deal harshly with him. (Wuslah) said: "Be quiet; I will take care of it." He called out to the man: "O brother, I have some business with thee." He answered: "What?" (Wuslah): "Thou shouldst raise the hem of thy wrapper." He answered: "*Very good and thanks.*" Then, (Wuslah) said to his students: "If I had spoken harshly to him, he would have said: 'I shall not do it,' and he might also have insulted me."

A man put his hand on a woman and drew a knife. No one had the boldness to approach him as the woman screamed. Bishr Hafi (R) passed by him and struck his shoulder against the man's shoulder with such force that the man fell down and became unconscious and then began to sweat. The woman escaped from him. The people asked (the man): "What happened to thee?" He said: "I do not know! A man passed by me and his body struck mine. And he whispered: 'God sees where thou art and what thou doest.' I fell down from the awe of those words." They said: "That was Bishr Hafi." The man said: "Ah! I cannot look

⁹⁸⁹ They were, of course, sitting on the floor, usually on mats or rugs.

⁹⁹⁰ Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah: Sufyān bin 'Uyaynah, Abū Muhammad, a well-known ascetic and scholar of the Quran and the Religious Law born c. AH96/715CE. He lived at Kufah and died in hiding at Basrah AH161-2/778CE.

⁹⁹¹ Wuslah bin Ashyam: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

upon him out of shame." He immediately became feverish and did not live more than a week.

PART THREE: CONCERNING OBJECTIONABLE THINGS THAT ARE COMMON IN CUSTOM

Know that in this era, the world is filled with bad things, and the people have lost hope that it will be rectified. Because they are not able to (correct) everything, they also keep distant from what they are able to do. Those persons who are religious are the same. As for the heedless, they themselves are quite satisfied with that. However, it is not lawful that thou be silent about what thou art able to do. We shall indicate each chastisement for these, for it is not possible to discuss all of them. Some of these transgressions occur in the mosque, some in the market, some in the public bath, and some at home.

OBJECTIONABLE ACTS IN MOSQUES

Those are that a person performs formal prayer and does not bow and prostrate himself completely; or he recites the Quran with a tune;⁹⁹² or the callers who summon the people to the obligatory formal prayer call with many modulations. This is prohibited. At the time (of chanting) *Come to success*,⁹⁹³ he turns his whole body away from the direction of prayer. Another is that the preacher wear garments of black silk and hold a sword decorated with gold, (both of) which are forbidden.⁹⁹⁴ Another is that is not proper to hold a meeting, tell stories, and recite poetry in the mosque, or to sell amulets or other things. Also, the entry of madmen and drunkards into the mosque—when they raise their voices and annoy the people in the mosque. However, it is lawful for children who are quiet or the mad person who gives no trouble and does not soil the mosque to enter it. But, if the children occasionally start to play in the mosque, they should not be stopped, because the blacks were playing with swords and shields in the mosque of Madinah when 'Ayishah (R) watched them. But, if the play is prolonged, it should be stopped. If a person sews or writes something, not disturbing the people, it is lawful. Moreover, if one always lays out a display (of goods for sale) that bothers no one, it is lawful, but if it always becomes a place of trade, it is disliked.⁹⁹⁵

⁹⁹² "tune" (*lahn*): or with mispronunciations. The Arabic word admits of both meanings, but it here it probably refers to an exaggerated style of chanting which distorts the words and can make them virtually unintelligible.

⁹⁹³ A phrase of the call to prayer where the caller turns his head to the left.

⁹⁹⁴ The preacher's holding the sword is not forbidden; the gold on it is.

⁹⁹⁵ "disliked": *makrūh*.

As for a work that causes a crowd to appear in the mosque, such as continually giving orders or writing deeds, it is not appropriate except occasionally when judicial case occurs. The Messenger (S) sometimes issued judgments (in the mosque). As for the washermen who dry clothing in the mosque, or dyers who dye and dry cloth in the mosque, this is objectionable. People who lecture to assemblies in the mosque and relate stories from untrustworthy books of Traditions, in which there are additions and omissions, should also be driven out, as the forefathers were wont to do. As for those, dominated by their carnal appetites, who dress up and recite things in rhymed prose and sing songs while young women are present in the assembly, these are major sins and are not proper outside the mosque either. Rather, the preacher should be a person who is externally righteous and possess the garb and form of the religious and (their) gravity.

In whatever form it occurs, it is not proper for young women and men to sit in the mosque without an obstruction between them, as Ayishah (R), in her own time, interdicted women from the mosque. In the time of the Messenger (S), it was not forbidden. She said: "If the Messenger could see what the state of affairs is today, he would have forbidden it. Among the objectionable actions: holding a council in the mosque, dividing (something), arranging village affairs, turning it into an arena, engaging in slanderous and vain conversation. All of these are objectionable and are contrary to the sanctity of the mosque.

OBJECTIONABLE ACTS IN PUBLIC MARKETS

These are that (merchants) lie about the goods for sale and conceal their defects, give false measure with scales, weights, and measuring sticks, adulterate the goods, sell lutes and staffs to which small bells are attached, sell figures of animals for children at the Festivals, sell wooden swords and shields at New Year's,⁹⁹⁶ clay horns for the Festival of the Dragon,⁹⁹⁷ sell caps and tunics made of silk for men, or sell mended and washed clothes, offering them as new, and anything in which there is that kind of fraud; or who sell censers, jugs, utensils, and vessels of silver and gold, and the like.

Among these things, some are forbidden and some disliked. As for the figures of animals, they are forbidden. As for that which is sold at New Year's and the Festival of the Dragon such as the wooden swords

⁹⁹⁶ New Year's Day (*naw rūz*): See Note 744 above.

⁹⁹⁷ "Festival of the Dragon" (*Sadah*): a festival in which the Persians lit bon fires to commemorate the victory of Hushang over a dangerous dragon. He accomplished this by throwing one huge stone upon another, thereby cause sparks which that the brush about the dragon, burning it to death. (Steingass.) It was celebrated fifty days before the New Year on the 10th of Bahman (about the 29th of January).

and shields and the clay horns, they are not in themselves forbidden, but the display of the Zoroastrian customs is forbidden and this is contrary to the Law; whatever is used for that is not proper. Indeed, excess in decorating the markets for New Year's Day, making a large quantity of New Year's Day cakes, and the increase in new formalities for New Year's Day are not good. Rather, the New Year's Festival and the Festival of the Dragon should be expunged, nor should anyone mention them. A party of the forefathers has said: "One should fast on the New Year's Festival because eating those foods is not proper. One should not light a lamp on the eve of the Dragon Festival so that no fire may be seen." Researchers have said: "Fasting on that day is also the remembrance of that day. It is not proper that the name of the day be mentioned in any manner. Rather, it should be treated the same as any other day. The same for the eve of the Dragon Festival, so that neither name and nor trace of it remain."

OBJECTIONABLE ACTS ON PUBLIC THOROUGHFARES

These are that a post should not be placed on the road, or goods laid out for sale so as to narrow the right of way, or trees planted, or a canopy extended into it so that it strikes a person riding an animal, or an animal tethered in it while being loaded so as to restrict passage—this is not proper except when absolutely necessary, as when unloading and delivering to a house. It is not right that animals be driven in narrow streets loaded with sharp objects that may tear clothing, except when there is no alternative to that route. Then, it is lawful out of necessity.

It is not right to load animal with a burden heavier than it has the strength to bear. It is not proper for a butcher to slaughter a sheep in the road so that so as to create the danger (of splashing blood) on people's clothing. He should construct a place for that in his shop. The same is true for throwing melon rinds into a public thoroughfare, or pouring out water that makes the road slippery.⁹⁹⁸ Likewise, whoever throws snow into the road, or his (rain) water falls into the road from the eaves of his house so as to block the road is obliged to clean it up. However, that which is universal is a duty for all, and the governor should make the people carry it away. It is not right for anyone to keep a dog at his gate that causes people anxiety. If there is no trouble from it other than it keeps the road dirty and pollutes it, it cannot be prohibited, for avoidance is possible. But if it sleeps on the road restricting traffic, it is not proper. For, if his master were to sit or sleep on the road, it would not be proper.

⁹⁹⁸ It should be remembered that streets were rarely paved in Ghazzali's time and they would become slippery with mud when water fell on them.

OBJECTIONABLE ACTS IN THE PUBLIC BATHS

These are that (a man) does not cover himself from his navel to his knees, or that he exposes his bare thigh to the masseur for massage or scraping. Indeed, it is not proper for (the masseur) to insert his hand under the loin wrapper, for touching has the same import as seeing. The pictures of living creatures⁹⁹⁹ on the walls of the bath are objectionable. They should be destroyed or taken out. Also, putting a hand, bucket, or cup in a small amount of water is objectionable in the school of Shafi'i (R), but is not according to the Malikite school. Using a lot of water and wasting it are among the objectionable acts. There are other objectionable acts which we have discussed in the chapter concerning Obligatory Purity.¹⁰⁰⁰

OBJECTIONABLE THINGS IN ENTERTAINING GUESTS

Silk carpets, gold and silver censers and sprinkling bottles (for rose water), perfume bottles and curtains upon which there are pictures—however, pictures are lawful on carpets and pillows; and censers in the form of animals are objectionable. As for the music of stringed instruments and the looking of young women at the young men that is the seed of corruption, it is a duty to safeguard public morality and act against all of these. If one is not able to do that, one should leave. Ahmad Hanbal rose and left (a place) because of a silver collyrium box he had seen. In the same way, it is not proper to stay in a party where there is a man wearing silk clothing or a gold ring. If a child of rational age has on silken clothing, it is also not proper to sit there, for silk is forbidden for the males of the people (of Muhammad), just as drinking wine is. Too, (the boy) may become habituated to that and the appetite for that may remain with him after puberty. However, if the child is below the age of rationality, and does not appreciate the pleasure of it, it is disliked, but (his wearing silk) does not, indeed, reach the level of prohibition. It is not proper to remain at a party in which there is a buffoon causing laughter by lies and improprieties.

A detailed (list) of objectionable acts would be lengthy. Now that you have become acquainted with these, make an analogy of them with the objectionable acts at schools, the lodges of dervishes, the courts of judgment, the court of the king, and the like.

⁹⁹⁹ "living creatures" (*hayawān*): creatures endowed with the animating spirit. This usually refers to animals, but can include humans. This seems to be the sense in which Ghazzali is using the word here.

¹⁰⁰⁰ The First Pillar, Chapter Three.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCERNING GOVERNANCE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE STATE

Know that having sovereign power is a great matter: the vice-regency of God Most High on the earth—if it be conducted in a just way. When it is devoid of compassion and justice, it is the vice-regency of Iblis. There is no greater cause of corruption than the oppression of a ruler. The basis of having sovereign power is knowledge and action.

The knowledge of exercising sovereign power is lengthy, but at the head of all those sciences is this: the ruler must know for what purpose he has been brought to this world and what his permanent abode will be. The world is his way station, not his permanent abode. He is in the form of a traveler whose mother's womb was his first station and the grave will be his final station. His homeland lies beyond that. Every year, every month, every day that passes of his life is like a leg of that journey by which he moves ever closer to his permanent abode. Everyone must pass over the Bridge.¹⁰⁰¹

If he spends his life on the construction of the bridge and forgets the destination, he is unwise. Rather, wise is he who does not engage in anything in the station of the world except the search for the provisions for the journey (to the Hereafter). He is content with worldly goods according to the amount of his need and necessity. Anything in excess of that is all a fatal poison. At the time of death, all of his sovereign power will be dust and there will be nothing of his gold and silver. Therefore, whoever accumulates much, his portion of that is the amount of his own need. All of the rest is the seed of envy and regret. Tearing his soul away will become hard for him at the time of death. The torment of the Hereafter is itself based upon these regrets.

It is not possible to endure the appetite for the world patiently, except with painful effort. But, if one's faith is sound in that one will lose the pleasure of the Hereafter—and that is an eternal kingdom which no affliction can touch—because of the miserable and turbid pleasures of this life, enduring these few days becomes easy—if one's faith is sound. It is the same for person who has a beloved and is told: "If thou goest to thy beloved this night, thou wilt never see thy beloved again. But, if thou art patient tonight, we shall deliver thy beloved to thee for a thousand nights without a companion and without a guardian." Even if his love is excessive, enduring the one night will be easy for him out of the expectation of a thousand nights.

¹⁰⁰¹ "the Bridge": the bridge over the fires of hell leading to Paradise. For the righteous, it will be a broad highway; for the unrighteous, it will be narrower than the edge of a sword.

The duration of the world is not a thousandth of the duration of the Hereafter. Indeed, it is not related to that, for (the Hereafter) is endless and the length of eternity cannot be encompassed by the imagination of any person. If one imagines that the seven heavens and the earth are filled with millet and every thousand years a bird removes one grain of that millet, that millet will (eventually) become exhausted; but nothing will have been diminished of eternity! Consequently, the life of a human being, if, for example, one lives a hundred years and is entrusted with an earthly empire extending from the east to the west, uncontested, how much is there in that when put beside a Hereafter without end? Since everyone has some small part of the world itself entrusted to him, and that (little bit), too, is miserable and turbid; and in all that there is, there are many vile persons who are, in that sense, ahead of him and behind him, what compulsion prompts a person to sell the everlasting kingdom for this humble and miserable life on earth?

The significance of this is that the ruler or the non-ruler must evaluate himself and refresh his soul so that restraining himself from the carnal appetites of the world, being compassionate with subjects, treating the servants of God Most High (the people) well, and exercising the vice-regency of God will be easy for him. If he comprehends this, he must busy himself with governance in that manner which has been commanded, not in the manner that is for his worldly interest. For, there is no act of worship or intimacy greater to God Most High than just governance. The Messenger (S) says: "One day of justice by a just ruler is better than the continual worship of sixty years." Among the seven persons, according to the Traditions, who "shall be in the shadow of God Most High," the first is the just ruler. And he said: "The work of sixty truly righteous persons striving in worship is raised to heaven every day for the just ruler." And he said: "The most beloved and closest to God Most High is the just leader, and the most inimical and the most distant is the tyrannical leader." And he said: "By that God in Whose powerful grasp is the soul of Muhammad, every day as many deeds are taken up for the just ruler as are acts for all of his subjects, and each of his prayers are counted as 70,000 prayers."

Therefore, since it is thus, what booty is there greater than that God Most High grant a person the dignity of sovereignty so that one of his hours will be counted equal to the life span of another? When a person does not recognize this blessing and engages in oppression and (the sating) of his own desires, it is obvious that he deserves enmity.

THIS JUSTICE IS ACCOMPLISHED WITH THE OBSERVANCE OF TEN RULES:

THE FIRST RULE is that (the ruler) evaluate every occurrence as though he were the subject and another the ruler. Whatever he does not

approve of for himself, he should not approve of for other Muslims. If he does, he has dissembled and betrayed his own stewardship. On the day (of the battle) of Badr, the Messenger (S) was sitting in the shade when Gabriel (A) came to him and said: "Thou art in the shade and thy Companions are in the sun!" (The Messenger) was reproached for this much of a difference!

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever desires to escape hell and go to heaven must, when death overtakes him, be overtaken upon the words '*there is no god but God*,' with that intent that whatever he disapproves of for himself, he disapproves of for every Muslim." And he said: "Whoever rises in the morning and has some ambition other than (the satisfaction of) God Most High is not a man of God. If he does nothing for the affairs of Muslims and does not care for them, he is not one of them."

THE SECOND RULE is that he not discount the waiting of those having needs in his court and that he be wary of that danger. So long as any Muslim has a need, he should not engage in any supererogatory acts of worship, for the taking care of the needs of Muslims is more important than any supererogatory acts of worship. One day 'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz (R) was attending to the affairs of the people up to the time of the noon obligatory formal prayer and he had not finished. He went to his residence for an hour's rest. Someone said to him: "What surety dost thou have that death will not come upon thee during this hour while there may be a person in need waiting in the thy court and whose rights thou wouldst have failed to take care of?" ('Umar) rose immediately and went back (to his court).

THE THIRD RULE is that one not let oneself become habituated to indulging one's appetites so that one wears fine clothing and eats delicious foods; rather, one must be satisfied (with little) in all things, for it is not possible to be dissatisfied and just.

'Umar Khattab (R) asked Salman: "What hast thou heard about my affairs which thou findest repugnant?" He answered: "I have heard that once thou didst place two kinds of stew on thy dining cloth and that thou hast two tunics, one for the day and the other for the night." ('Umar) said: "Nothing other than this?" "No." ('Umar): "These two shall not be any more."

THE FOURTH RULE is that the foundation of affairs, as much as possible, be kindness, not harshness. The Messenger (S) said: "Every ruler who shows compassion to his subjects will be treated with compassion on the Day of Resurrection." He offered a supplication, saying: "O Lord God! Be compassionate with every ruler who shows compassion to his subjects. Be harsh with him who is harsh (with his

subjects)." And, said the Messenger (S): "Sovereignty and command is a good thing for the person who acts on their behalf. Power is a bad thing for the person who violates (the trust)."

Hisham bin 'Abd al-Malik was one of the caliphs. He asked Abu Hazim,¹⁰⁰² one of the great religious scholars: "What is the stratagem for salvation in this work?" (The scholar) answered: "That every dirham thou receivest should be received from a source which is lawful and that thou puttest it where it is properly due." He said: "Who is able to do that?" (The scholar) said: "Whoever does not have the strength to endure hell and who loves Paradise."

THE FIFTH RULE is that one strive earnestly that every subject be pleased with one in agreement with the Religious Law together. The Messenger (S) said: "The best of leaders are those who like you and whom ye like; the worst of them are those who are inimical to you and to whom you are inimical. They curse you and ye curse them." The ruler must not become haughty because of what he hears and the praise he is given. He may suppose that all are pleased with him, while all of that (praise) is from fear. Rather, he must dispatch confidants to investigate and ask the people about his status (with them), so that he may learn his own defects from their voices.

THE SIXTH RULE is that he not seek the pleasure of any person contrary to the Law. The displeasure of whoever is displeased because (of that person's) opposition to the Law causes no loss to (the ruler). 'Umar (R) said: "Every day that I rise, one half of mankind is displeased with me." Necessarily, anyone who receives a decision against him will be unhappy, so both opposing litigants cannot be pleased. And he said: "The person who passes up the satisfaction of God Most High for the satisfaction of people is indeed a great ignoramus."

Mu'awiyah wrote a letter to 'Ayishah (R): "Give me some brief advice." 'Ayishah (R) wrote to him: "I heard from the Messenger (S) that God Most High will be pleased with whoever seeks the pleasure of God Most High through the displeasure of the people and He will also change that to the people's being pleased with him. And God Most High will be displeased with whoever seeks the pleasure of the people with the displeasure of God Most High, and He will also make the people displeased with him."

THE SEVENTH RULE is that one know that the danger of power is hard to bear and the assumption of the government of God Most High's people a tremendous affair. Whoever has had the good fortune to engage

¹⁰⁰² Abu Hazim: See Note 815 above.

in that has received a great happiness, beyond which there is no (greater) happiness. If he is deficient, he falls into misfortune, beyond which there is no misfortune like it.

Ibn 'Abbas (R) says: "One day I saw the Messenger (S) coming. He seized the ring of the door of the Ka'bah. There were some of the Quraysh inside it. Then he said: 'Leaders and rulers are from the Quraysh as long as they perform three things: one is that they be merciful when they are asked for mercy, that they be just when they are asked for judgment, and that they do what they say. Let whoever does not do this be cursed by God, the angels, and all mankind! God Most High will not accept a religious duty from him, nor a Practice of the Prophet.'" So, look! How great a matter this is that, because of it, no act of worship will be acceptable, neither obligatory, nor of the Traditional practice!

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever judges between two persons and is unjust; let the unjust one be cursed by God!" And he (S) said: "There are three people at whom God Most High will not look on the Day of Resurrection: the lying ruler, the old adulterer, and the overweening beggar—that is, the impudent and bragging dervish." And he (S) said to the Companions: "It will be very soon that eastern and western lands will be conquered and become yours. All of the officials of those parts will be in fire except him who abstains because of God Most High, takes the path of piety, and fulfills the trust."

And he said: "There is no servant (of God) to whom God Most High entrusts a subject whom he deceives and to whom he does not show compassion and give counsel that God Most High does not forbid heaven to him." And he (S) said: "Say to anyone who has been granted sovereignty over Muslims and does not regard them as his own family: 'Take thy place in hell!'" And he (S) said: "Two persons of my nation will be deprived of my intercession: the oppressive ruler and the innovator (in religion) who overshoots the mark in religion until it exceeds the limit." And he (S) said: "The hardest torment on the Day of Resurrection will be that of the unjust rulers."

And he (S) said: "There are five persons with whom God Most High is angry. If He wishes, He subjects them to His anger in this world; if not, their residence will be in the Fire. One is the prince of a people who takes his right from them and does not give them justice and who does not withhold his tyranny from them. Another is the chief of a people who obey him while he does not observe equality between the strong and the weak and speaks with bias. Another is the man who does not command his wife and children to obey God, does not teach them their religious obligations, and does not care where their food comes from. Another is the man who does not pay the wages of a worker he has hired when the work is completed. And another is the man who oppresses his wife because of the dowry (he is obligated to pay her).

'Umar (R) wanted to perform formal prayer for a dead person. A man went forward and performed the prayer. Then, after the corpse had been buried, he put his hand on the grave and said: "O Lord God! If Thou tormentest him, let it be because he was a rebel against Thee. If Thou showest him mercy, he is in need of mercy. Rejoice, O man, for thou wert never a prince, nor a deputy, nor a clerk, nor an executive officer, nor a tax collector." Then the man vanished. 'Umar (R) ordered that he be sought, but he was not found. 'Umar (R) said: "That was Khidr."¹⁰⁰³

The Messenger (S) said: "Woe unto the princes! Woe unto the deputies! Woe unto the betrayer of trust! They are a people who will wish at the Resurrection that they had been suspended from the heavens by their own hair and had never done any official work." And the Messenger (S) said: "No man is given dominion over ten persons that he is not brought forth manacled on the Day of Resurrection. If he was a doer of good, he will be set free; if not, more fetters will be added."

'Umar Khattab (R) said: "Woe unto the earthly judge from the Heavenly Judge when He sees him, unless he has given justice and done right, not issued judgments capriciously, not favored his relatives, and has not altered judgments out of either fear or expectation; but has made a mirror of the Book of God Most High and placed it in front of himself and judged with that."

And the Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection the rulers will be brought out and it will be said: 'Ye were the shepherds of Our flocks and the treasurers of Our earthly kingdom. Why did ye beat in punishment and punish more than that which I have commanded?' They will say: 'O Lord God! Out of anger for their trespasses against Thee.' He will say: 'Why should your anger be greater than Mine?' Then He will say to another: 'Why didst thou beat in punishment less than that which I have commanded?' He will say: 'O Lord God! I had mercy on him.' He will say: 'Why shouldst thou be more merciful than I?' They will seize him who exceeded and him who reduced and they will fill the corners of hell."

Hudhayfah says: "I, in all events, do not praise any ruler whether he be good or bad." He was asked: "Why?" He answered: "Because I heard the Messenger (S) say: 'On the Day of Resurrection, all the rulers will be brought forward, unjust and just, and all will be placed upon the Bridge (over the fires of hell). God Most High will inspire the bridge to scatter them with a single scattering so that that everyone who had oppressed in judgment, or accepted a bribe in a case, or listened too much to one side (in a dispute)—all will fall and go to hell for seventy years, until that time when they reach their own station.'"

¹⁰⁰³ Khidr: See Note 902 above.

In the Traditions, it is related: "David (A) used to go out at night in disguise so that they did not know that he was David. He would ask everyone he met about David's character. One day Gabriel came before him in the form of a man and said to him: 'David would be a good man if it were not that he ate food from the public treasury, not that which he had earned by his own labor.' Then David went to a niche and wept, saying: 'O Lord God! Teach me a skill that I may eat by my own labor.' Then God Most High taught him how to make chain mail."¹⁰⁰⁴

'Umar Khattab (R) used to make the rounds each night in the place of the night patrol so that whenever he found some deficiency he could take care of it. He said: "If there is a mangy sheep being driven by the channel of the Euphrates, and oil is not rubbed on it, I fear that I shall be questioned about it at the Resurrection." As his caution was like this and his justice was like that, no one could overtake him.

'Abdullah bin 'Amr 'As (R) says: "I had supplicated God Most High that He would show me 'Umar in a dream. After twelve years, I saw him in a dream like a person who had performed the greater ablution and was holding a loincloth in front of him. I said: 'O Commander of the Believers, how hast thou found God Most High?' He replied: 'O 'Abdullah, how long has it been since I departed from thee?' I said: 'Twelve years.' He said: 'Until now, I have been engaged in the reckoning of my account. It was feared that my affair would be ruined, if God had not had mercy upon me.'"

The condition of 'Umar was thus, even though he had nothing more of the trappings of office than a scourge. Buzurgmihr¹⁰⁰⁵ sent a messenger to see what kind of a man 'Umar was and what his character was like. When he reached Madinah, he asked: "Where is your king?" They answered: "We do not have a king. We have a commander who has gone out of the gate." He also went out and saw 'Umar sleeping on the ground in the sun. He had placed some armor under his head as a pillow and his brow was running with sweat, wetting the earth. When (the messenger) saw that state, he was deeply affected. This was the man for whom all the kings of the world trembled in awe! Then he said: "Thou hast established justice; thou mayest certainly sleep in security. Our king has oppressed; he most certainly is always fearful. I testify that the true religion is your religion. If I had not come here as a messenger, I would immediately become a Muslim. Now I shall return after this."

¹⁰⁰⁴ In Islamic tradition, David is credited with the invention of chain mail (*zirih*).

¹⁰⁰⁵ Buzurgmihr, famous in Iranian history and folklore for his wisdom, integrity, and piety. He served as chief minister and counselor for the Sassanian monarch Anushirwan the Just (rgd. 531-579CE). At that time, Zoroastrianism was the state religion of Iran. Islam entered Iran with a series of Persian defeats at the hands of the Arabs in the second quarter of the 1st Islamic (2nd quarter of 7th CE) century.

So, this is the danger of sovereign power. The study of this is lengthy. The ruler will find safety in always keeping pious religious scholars near in order to teach him the way of justice and remind him of the danger of this task.

THE EIGHTH RULE is that one always be thirsty to see the pious religious scholars and to be eager to hear their counsel, and to be wary of seeing the religious scholars who are eager for the world, as they will tempt one and praise one and seek one's pleasure until they put the corpses and forbidden things of the world into one's hands by trickery and deceit.

The pious scholar is he who does not covet (the ruler) and gives him his just due, as when Shaqiq of Balkh¹⁰⁰⁶ went to Harun al-Rashid.¹⁰⁰⁷ Harun said: "Art thou Shaqiq the ascetic?" He said: "I am Shaqiq, but I am not an ascetic." (Harun) said: "Give me some advice." He answered: "God Most High has put thee in the place of the Most Truthful One¹⁰⁰⁸ and asks of thee truth as he did of him. He has put thee in the place of the Distinguisher (of Truth from Falsehood)¹⁰⁰⁹ and asks of thee to distinguish between the true and the false as He did of him. He has put thee in the place of the Possessor of the Two Lights¹⁰¹⁰ and asks of thee modesty as He did of him. And He has put thee in the place of 'Ali the son of Abu Talib and asks of thee wisdom and justice as He did of him." (Harun) said: "Add to that counsel." He said: "Yes, God Most High has a palace which is called hell, and he has made thee its gatekeeper. He has given thee three things: the wealth of the public treasury, the sword, and the whip; and He has said: 'Keep the people out of hell with these three things. With this whip, whip whoever acts contrary to the command of God and discipline him. With this sword, execute whoever kills a person unjustly, with the permission of his avenger.¹⁰¹¹ If thou dost not do this, thou wilt be the first to enter hell and

¹⁰⁰⁶ Shaqiq of Balkh: A Khorasani ascetic who died fighting in defense of Islam AH194/810CE. He was a disciple of Ibrahim Adham. Hatim al-Asamm (see Note 681) was one of Shaqiq's disciples. Some say that Shaqiq was the first to define trust in God (*tawakkul*) as a mystical state (*hāl*). (Arberry, Bagley)

¹⁰⁰⁷ Harun al-Rashid: The fifth caliph of the Abbasid dynasty, rgd. AH170-194/786-809CE. He ascended the throne when he was nearly 25 and presided over virtually all of the Islamic world except Spain. His reign is famous for its brilliance and he is best known in the West as a prominent figure in the *Arabian Nights*.

¹⁰⁰⁸ "the Most Truthful One" (*Siddiq*): an epithet Abu Bakr, the first caliph (rgd. AH11-13/632-634CE).

¹⁰⁰⁹ "the Distinguisher (of Truth from Falsehood)" (*Fārūq*): an epithet of 'Umar bin Khattab, the second caliph (rgd. AH13-23/634-644CE).

¹⁰¹⁰ "the Possessor of the Two Lights" (*Dhū Nūrayn*): an epithet of 'Uthman, the third caliph (rgd. AH23-35/644-656CE).

¹⁰¹¹ Avenger: the representative of the slain person who has the choice of accepting the blood money or demanding the killer's life.

the others will follow thee." (Harun) said: "Say more and advise me." He said: "Thou art the spring; the others are the channel—those who are thine officials. If the spring is clear, turbidity in the channels does no harm; but if (the spring) is dark, there is no hope that the channels will be clear."

Harun al-Rashid went with 'Abbas, who was one of his confidants, to Fudayl 'Iyad. When they arrived at the gate of his house, (Fudayl) was reading the Quran and had come to this verse: *Or do those who commit evil deeds suppose that We shall make them as those who believe and do good works, the same in life and death? Bad is their judgment!* (Q. 45:21) (Harun) said: "If I seek advice, this verse is sufficient." (The meaning of this verse is that those who do evil deeds suppose that We hold them equal to those who have faith and do good deeds.)¹⁰¹² Then he said: "Knock on the door." 'Abbas knocked on the door and said: "Open the door to the Commander of the Believers." (Fudayl) answered: "What does the Commander of the Believers want with me?" ('Abbas) said: "Obey the Commander of the Believers. Open the door!" (Fudayl) opened the door. It was night and the lamps were extinguished. Harun groped about in the dark until his hand touched him. Fudayl said: "Ah! If only such a soft hand could find salvation from the God's torment!" Then he said: "Commander of the Believers! Be prepared to answer God on the Day of Resurrection, for thou wilt be displayed to every Muslim, one by one, and they will seek justice from thee." Harun began to weep. 'Abbas said (to Fudayl): "Be silent! Thou hast mortally wounded the Commander of the Believers." (Fudayl) said: "O Haman!¹⁰¹³ Thou and thy like have brought him to perdition; and yet thou sayest that I have wounded him!" Harun said to him: "Thou callest him Haman because thou have equated me with Pharaoh." Then he placed a thousand dinars in front of Fudayl and said: "This has been lawfully obtained, from the dowry of my mother." (Fudayl) said: "I say to thee that thou must let go of all thou possessest and return it to its (lawful) owners, and yet thou givest this to me?" He rose and left him and did not accept the money.

'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz¹⁰¹⁴ said to Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurazi:¹⁰¹⁵ "Tell me of the qualities of justice." He answered: "Be the

¹⁰¹² This is Ghazzali's exegesis of the preceding Quranic verse.

¹⁰¹³ Haman: a reference to Haman, the wicked chief minister of Pharaoh, in the story of Moses. He shares the same name and character with the chief minister of Persian king Ahasuerus in *Esther* in the Bible. (See the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective*, or *Moses in The Bible: An Islamic Perspective* series, for more about the question of the identity of Haman.)

¹⁰¹⁴ 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz, a caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, reigned AH99-101/717-720CE.

¹⁰¹⁵ Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurazi: an authority on Tradition who died in AH117/735CE.

father of any Muslim junior to thee. Be the son of any who is senior to thee. Be the brother of any one at thine own level. Punish each person according to the sin. Beware that thou dost not beat anyone out of anger, for then thy place will be in hell."

One of the ascetics went to the caliph of his time. (The caliph) said: "Give me some counsel." He said: "I went on a journey to China. The king had lost his hearing and wept much, saying: 'I do not weep because my hearing has become defective. Rather, I weep because the oppressed are crying at my gate and I do not hear them. However, my eyes function. Send a herald to announce that whoever is oppressed should wear red clothing.' Then, every day he would sit on an elephant and go out and call any person wearing red. O Commander of the Believers! That was an unbeliever who had such compassion on the servants of God Most High! Thou art a believer and from the household of the Messenger (S). Look how thy compassion is!"

Abu Qilabah¹⁰¹⁶ went to 'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz. ('Umar) said: "Give me some counsel." He said: "From the time of Adam (A) until today, no caliph has remained except thee." ('Umar) said: "Explain!" He said: "The first caliph who will die will be thou."¹⁰¹⁷ ('Umar) said: "Explain." He said: "If God Most High is with thee, what is there to fear? If He is not with thee, where wilt thou take shelter?" ('Umar) said: "What thou hast said is enough."

Sulayman (bin) 'Abd al-Malik¹⁰¹⁸ was the caliph. One day he was thinking and said: "In this world how much I have enjoyed myself! What will be my condition at the Resurrection?" He sent someone to Abu Hazim, who was the scholar and ascetic of the age. He said: "Send me a sample of that with which thou breakest thine obligatory fast." (Abu Hazim) sent him some roasted bran and said: "I eat of this at night." When Sulayman saw that, he wept. He was greatly affected by this and fasted for three days, not eating anything. On the third evening, he broke his fast with the roasted bran. It is said that he lay with his wife that night (and his wife) conceived his son 'Abd al-'Aziz, who was unique in the world for justice and resembled 'Umar Khattab (R). And it is said that all of this was the blessing of that good intention and that food which he had eaten.

'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz was asked: "What was the cause of thy repentance?" He said: "One day I was beating a male slave. He said: 'Remember that night the morning of which will be the Resurrection.' I took that to heart."

¹⁰¹⁶ Abū Qilābah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁰¹⁷ So the HK text. AA has "The first caliph who will desire a reward will be thou." The difference is a single dot. HK has *khwāhad murd*, while AA has *khwāhad muzd*.

¹⁰¹⁸ Sulaymān bin 'Abd al-Malik: See Note 814.

One of the great saw Harun al-Rashid at 'Arafat standing on hot pebbles barefooted and bareheaded saying: "O Lord God! Thou art Thou, and I am I. My work is always to attend to sin; and Thy work is always to attend to forgiveness. Have mercy upon me!" That great one said: "Look how the almighty of the earth is lamenting before the Almighty of the heavens!"

'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz said to Abu Hazim: "Give me some counsel." He said: "Lie upon the ground and kiss it. Whatever thou holdest lawful for death to find with thee, keep. Keep away from whatever thou dost not hold lawful (to be found with thee at death); for it may be that death is near."

Therefore, the possessor of sovereign power must keep these stories before him and accept these counsels and others that have been given. He should seek counsel from every learned person he sees. Every learned person who sees rulers should counsel them in like manner and not hold back the word of truth, nor make them prideful, for then he will be a partner in their acts of injustice.

THE NINTH RULE is that he should not be content that he himself restrains oppression, but he should discipline his slaves, servants, and representatives, for he will be responsible for their injustices. 'Umar Khattab (R) wrote a letter to Abu Musa al-Ash'ari¹⁰¹⁹ who was his appointee: "Moreover, the most fortunate of those having subjects is that person whose subjects are fortunate in him. The most miserable person is he whose subjects are miserable because of him. Beware! Do not be extravagant, as thine officials will be the same. Then thy similitude will be that of the animal that sees some grass and eats gluttonously of it and grows fat. Its fatness will be its destruction, because for that reason it will be slaughtered and eaten."

In the Torah, it is found: "Any injustice that is done by an officer of the ruler and (the ruler) remains silent, (the ruler) has committed. He shall be held accountable for it." The ruler must know that there is no one more defrauded and more lacking in intelligence than he who sells his own religion and future life for another (temporal) world. All officials and servants serve for their own worldly portion and make injustice attractive to the eye of the ruler in order to send him to hell and to reach their own objectives. What enemy is greater than the one who works for thy destruction for the few unlawful dirhams that he will obtain?

In short, a person is not observing justice with his subjects whose own officers and servants do not keep to justice, (nor is) a person who is

¹⁰¹⁹ Abu Musa al-Ash'ari: Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, a Companion of the Prophet, he was the appointed governor of Basrah by 'Umar and the governor of Kufah by 'Uthman. He was an arbiter on the side of 'Ali in the dispute between 'Ali and Mu'awiyah. Noted for his recitation of the Quran and his piety, he was also a courageous soldier.

not just with his own family, children, and slaves. He does not do this unless he observes justice first inside his own body. That justice is that he restrain injustice, appetite, and anger from his own power of reason so that they become the prisoners of reason and religion rather than that reason and religion should become their prisoners. Most people have enlisted their power of reason for the service of their appetites and anger, and they devise some subterfuge so that appetite and anger may achieve their goals. Intelligence is of the essence of the angels and the armies of God Most High, while appetite and anger are the armies of Iblis. How can a person who has imprisoned the army of God Most High in the hands of the army of Iblis do justice to others? So, the sun of justice first appears in the breast, then its light falls upon the family, then it spreads to one's attendants, then the sunbeams reach one's subjects. Whoever expects sunbeams without the sun is seeking the impossible.

Know that justice arises from the perfection of the intellect; the perfection of the intellect is that one see matters as they are, perceive their internal true nature, and be not deceived by appearances. For example, if he withholds justice for the sake of the world, he looks at what his objective from the world is. If the objective is that he eat his own food, he must understand that he is a beast in the form of a man, for gluttony is the work of quadrupeds. If he does it so that he may wear silken garments, he is a woman in the form of a man, for beautification is the work of women. If he does it to purge his anger on his enemy, he is a beast of prey in the form of a man, for tearing apart and quarreling is the work of predators. If he does it so that people will serve him, he is an ignoramus in the form of a rational being, for if he were rational, he would know that they are all servants of their own stomachs and serve their own appetites and pleasures. They have made of him the net for (the satisfaction of) their own appetites. The prostrations that they make are for themselves. The sign of that is if they hear false rumors that the governorship and post will be given to another, all of them will fly from him and start to seek favor with that other governor. Wherever they think there is gold and silver, there they will be, bearing their prostrations and service! So, in truth, this is not service; rather, it is mockery. The rational person is he who sees the true nature and spirit of affairs, not their outward appearance. The true nature of these affairs is as has been said; whoever does not realize this is not intelligent. The place for whoever is neither intelligent nor just is hell. Because of this, reason is at the head of all happiness.

THE TENTH RULE is that a ruler is usually haughty, and from haughtiness, anger becomes dominant and invites him to revenge. Anger is the enemy of reason and its blight. Its treatment we shall describe in

the chapter on Anger in the Pillar of the Destroyers.¹⁰²⁰ However, when (anger) overcomes, he must endeavor to lean towards forgiveness in all affairs, and make a habit of generosity and patience. He must know that when he makes this his habit, he will be like the prophets, Companions, and the saints. But, when he gives rein to his anger, he is like the Turks, Kurds, and foolish people who are like beasts of prey and beasts of burden.

It is related that when Abu Ja'far¹⁰²¹ was caliph he ordered that a person who had committed some treachery be executed. Mubarak bin Fadalāh¹⁰²² was present. He said: "O Commander of the Believers, first listen to a Tradition of the Messenger (S). "(Abu Ja'far) said: 'Speak.'" (Mubarak) said: "Hasan Basri (R), narrates that the Messenger said: 'On the Day of Judgment, at the time when all mankind is gathered on one plain, a herald will cry: "Whoever has a friend with God Most High arise!" No one will arise save the person who has forgiven another.'" (Abu Ja'far) said: "Remove your hands from him, for I have forgiven him."

Most of the anger of rulers comes from someone's insulting them and they try to shed his blood. At that moment, they should remember that which Jesus (A) said to John (the Baptist) (A): "Thank whoever says something to thee and speaks the truth. If he tells a lie, thou shouldst be more thankful, for a good deed will be credited to thine account without any effort on thy part." That is, the acts of worship of that person will be credited to thine account.

They were saying about someone in the presence of the Messenger (S): "He is a very strong man," He asked: "Why (do ye say that)?" They replied: "He throws down whomever he wrestles and he overcomes everyone." The Messenger (S) said: "Strong and manly is that person who overcomes his own anger, not he who overcomes another person." And he (S) said: "There are three things by which, if anyone acquires them, his faith will be complete: when he is seized by anger that he not make some vain design; when he is pleased that he not exceed what is right; and when he is powerful that he not take more than is his right."

'Umar (R) said: "Do not put faith in any person so long as thou hast not seen him at the time of his anger. Do not put faith in any person so long as thou hast not tested him at the time of his avidity."

¹⁰²⁰ Chapter Four of the Third Pillar, *The Destroyers*.

¹⁰²¹ Abu Ja'far: Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr, the second Abbasid caliph (rgd. AH136-158/754-775CE). He founded Baghdad in AH145/762-3CE and made it the capital of the Abbasid caliphate. He was commonly known as Abu Ja'far.

¹⁰²² Mubārak bin Fadalāh: a teacher of Sulayman bin Harb who died AH224/839CE. This would place him in the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century. (IKh)

'Ali bin al-Husayn (R) went to the mosque one day. Someone was berating him. His slaves made for that person, but he said: "Do not touch him." Then he said to the man: "There is much more about me that is concealed from thee. Is there anything that I can do for thee?" The man became ashamed. Then 'Ali bin al-Husayn took off his tunic and gave it to him and he ordered a thousand dirhams for him. As the man was leaving, he was saying: "I swear that this man is none other than a descendant of the Messenger." It is also been related about ('Ali), that he called out twice for a slave, but (the young man) did not answer. "Didst thou not hear me?" ('Ali) demanded. He said: "I did." "Why didst thou not answer?" He said: "I was certain that thou wouldst not punish me because of thy character and good nature." ('Ali) said: "Thank God that my slave is safe from me." He¹⁰²³ had a slave who, one day, broke the leg of a sheep. ('Ali) asked: "Why didst thou do that?" He replied: "I did it deliberately in order to anger thee." ('Ali) said: "Now I shall be angry at the person who taught thee that!"—he meant Iblis—and he set the slave free. Someone called him¹⁰²⁴ a bad name. He said: "Young man, there is a steep pass between me and hell. If I cross that pass, I have no fear of thy words. If I cannot overlook (them), I myself am worse than thou hast said."

The Messenger (S) said: "There are people who, by gentleness and forgiveness, reach the degree of the faster and the one who spends the night in prayer; and there are those whose names are recorded in the journal of the tyrants while they have no sovereignty except over their own families." And the Messenger (S) said: "There is a gate to hell through which no person enters unless he gives rein to his anger in opposition to the Law."

It is related that one day Iblis went to Moses (A) and said: "I shall teach thee three things so that thou will have need of me instead of God Most High." Moses said: "What are those three things?" He answered: "Beware of haste; for I play with whoever is hasty and impetuous as a child plays with a ball. Beware of women, for I have not laid any trap in the path of the people of which I am more certain than women. And third, beware of miserliness; for I bring the religion and world of whoever is a miser to loss."

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High fills the heart with security and faith of whoever swallows his anger and is able to control it. God Most High dresses with the robe of greatness whoever does not put on the garments of ostentation so as to humble himself before God Most High." And the Messenger (S) said: "Woe unto the person who becomes angry and forgets God Most High's anger at him."

¹⁰²³ In the AA text, the protagonist is Abu Dharr instead of 'Ali bin al-Husayn.

¹⁰²⁴ The AA text also ascribes this to Abu Dharr rather than 'Ali bin al-Husayn.

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "Teach me some thing by which I may reach heaven." He said: "Do not become angry and heaven is thine." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "Desire nothing from another person and heaven is thine." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "After finishing the obligatory afternoon formal prayer, ask for forgiveness seventy times so that thou may be forgiven the sins of seventy years." (The man) said: "I do not have seventy years of sin." He said: "The sins of thy mother." (The man) said: "My mother does not have many sins." He said: "Those of thy father." (The man) said: "My father does not have many sins." He said: "Those of thy brothers."

'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (R) says that the Messenger (S) was dividing some property when someone said: "This division is not according to God Most High," that is, it was not fair. Ibn Mas'ud told this to the Messenger (S). He grew angry and his face turned red. He said nothing more than: "May God Most High have mercy upon my brother Moses, for he was more tormented than this and he endured it."

Let all of these Traditions and stories suffice as counsel for the people of power. If the foundation of faith is in place, it will influence them. If it does not, it is a sign that their hearts are devoid of faith and nothing has remained with them except the talk on their tongues. Talk of the faith that is in one's heart is one thing, and faith another. I do not know how the true nature of faith lies in the soul of the official who throughout the year accepts thousands of unlawful dirhams and dinars and gives (that money) to another so that he is answerable for all. At the Resurrection, all will be taken back from him while the benefit will be given to others. This is the utmost limit of heedlessness and un-Muslim like behavior. *Peace!*

al-Ghazzali
Alchemy of Happiness

(Kimiya al-sa'adat)

Hujat al-Islām Abū Ḥāmid
Muḥammad Ghazzali Ṭūsī
VOLUME 2

TRANSLATED BY
JAY R. CROOK

INTRODUCTION BY
LALEH BAKHTIAR

SERIES EDITOR
SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR

GREAT BOOKS OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD

In *The Alchemy of Happiness* Ghazzali aims to guide man towards that state of Divine love and acceptance what he calls "spiritual happiness." Along the way there are many pitfalls, traps, and distracting temptations—internal and external—lying in wait for the careless traveler; but there are also defenders, guides, and helpers which he may enlist in his aid. *The Alchemy of Happiness* is nothing less than a critique and a manual, a detailed guidebook, to assist the traveler's progress to a happy conclusion. If successful, he passes safely through the awesome pageant of the Resurrection to achieve one of the degrees of bliss, the highest of which—vouchsafed only to the few—being that state where there remains neither fear of the terrors of hell nor appetite for the pleasures of Paradise. It is the pure ecstasy of the contemplation of the loving Divine Presence: absolute spiritual happiness

Jay R. Crook (Muhammad Nur) spent most of his working life in the Middle East, especially in Iran and Saudi Arabia. Hired by the Peace Corps as a field representative, he finished in 1971 as Deputy Director in the Iran program. He then enrolled in the Doctoral Program of Persian Literature for Foreigners at Tehran University and received his Ph.D. in 1978.

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IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

(Kīmiyā-yi Sa^cādat)

BY

Hujjat al-Islām

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad Ghazzālī Tūsī

(AH450-505/1058-1111CE)

VOLUME II

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GREAT BOOKS OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD

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The cypress tree bending with the wind, the source for the
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THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

BY IMAM GHAZZALI

*[In the name of God, the Merciful the Compassionate]*¹⁰²⁵

THE THIRD PILLAR: CONCERNING THE DESTROYERS

In this Pillar, there are also ten chapters:

THE FIRST CHAPTER: The Discovery of the Discipline of the Self

THE SECOND CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Appetites
of the Stomach and the Genitalia

THE THIRD CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Greed for Words
and the Detriments of the Tongue

THE FOURTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Sickness of Anger,
Envy, and Greed

THE FIFTH CHAPTER: Concerning the Treatment of the Love
for the World

THE SIXTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of the Love of Wealth
and the Bane of Miserliness

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of Love for Rank
and Retinue

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER: Concerning the Treatment
of Dissimulation and Hypocrisy in Worship

THE NINTH CHAPTER: Concerning the Treatment of Pride
and Conceit

THE TENTH CHAPTER: The Treatment of Delusion and
Self-Deception

¹⁰²⁵ From the AA text.

CHAPTER ONE: CONCERNING THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SELF AND ITS PURIFICATION FROM A BAD DISPOSITION

In this chapter, we shall discuss the virtue of a good disposition. Then, we shall expound what the true nature of a good disposition is; then, we shall declare that it is possible to achieve this through asceticism; then we shall explain the method of this; then, we shall discuss the signs of a bad disposition; then, we shall explain the plan for that person who recognizes his own faults; then, we shall discover the signs of a good disposition; then, we shall explain the method for raising and training children; then, we shall disclose the way of the earnest striving of the disciple at the beginning of his task.

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL REWARD OF A GOOD DISPOSITION

Know that God Most High has praised Mustafa¹⁰²⁶ (S) for his good disposition, saying: *And, lo! Thou art of a tremendous nature!* (Q. 68:4) And the Messenger (S) said: "I was sent to complete the excellences of character." And he (S) said: "The greatest thing placed in the scales¹⁰²⁷ is a good disposition."

Someone appeared before the Messenger (S) and asked: "What is religion?" He answered: "A good disposition." They came from the right and the left, asking (the same question again and again). He replied in the same way until at the last time he said: "Dost thou not know? That thou not anger." He (S) was asked: "What is the most virtuous of works?" He said: "A good disposition."

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "Give me some advice." He said: "Fear God Most High wherever thou mayst be." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "Do a good deed after every bad act in order to erase it." (The man) said: "Another." He said: "Mix with people good-naturedly." And he (S) said: "God Most High will not make whomever He has given a good disposition and a good appearance the food of fire."

And he (S) was told: "Such-and-such a woman fasts by day and spends her night in formal prayer, but has a bad disposition and her tongue afflicts her neighbors." He said: "Her place is in hell." And the Messenger (S) said: "A bad disposition ruins devotion as vinegar (ruins) honey."

¹⁰²⁶ "Mustafa" (*Mustafā*): an epithet for the Prophet, Muhammad (S), meaning "chosen, elected."

¹⁰²⁷ The scales that weigh good and bad deeds on the Day of Judgment.

And the Messenger (S) used to say as he made supplication: "O Lord God! Thou hast created my creation well; make my disposition also good." And he (S) used to say: "O Lord God! Grant (us) health, vigor, and a good disposition." The Messenger (S) was asked: "What is the best thing that God Most High gives His servant?" He answered: "A good disposition." And he (S) said: "A good disposition destroys sins as the sun (destroys) ice."

'Abd al-Rahman Samurah¹⁰²⁸ (R) says: "I was with the Messenger (S). He said: 'Last night I saw a strange thing: I saw a man of my own nation fallen on his knees, and there was a veil between him and God Most High. His good disposition came and lifted the veil, and he was transported to God Most High.' And he said: 'With a good disposition, a person achieves the level of him who fasts by day and prays by night. He attains great degrees in the Hereafter, even though his worship is weak.'"

The best natured of people was our Messenger (S). One day the women were noisy and overwhelming in his presence. When 'Umar entered, they fled. 'Umar (R) said (to them): "O enemies of yourselves! Ye have shame before me and have none before the Messenger of God Most High?" They said: "Thou art fiercer and harsher!" The Messenger (S) said: "O son of Khattab! By that God in Whose judgment lies my life, Satan never sees thee on a road that he does not relinquish that road and travel along another out of awe for thee."

Fudayl 'Iyad, may God have mercy upon him, said: "I prefer the company of a good-natured sinner to that of a bad-natured holy man." Ibn al-Mubarak, may God have mercy upon him, came upon a bad-natured person on the road. When he separated from him, he wept. He was asked: "Why art thou weeping?" He said: "That wretch went away from me and his bad disposition went with him and did not separate from him."

Kattani¹⁰²⁹ (R) says: "Sufism is good disposition. Whoever has a better disposition than thou is more of a Sufi." Yahya bin Mu'adh (R) says: "A bad disposition is a sin which no act of devotion can benefit. A good disposition is an act of devotion to which no sin can offer harm."

THE TRUE NATURE OF A GOOD DISPOSITION

Know that much has been said about the true nature of a good disposition—as to what and which it is. Each one has talked about that (aspect) which has come before him, but not about its totality. As one says: "It is having a smiling countenance." Another says: "It is taking on

¹⁰²⁸ 'Abd al-Rahman Samurah: 'Abd al-Rahmān bin Samurah bin Habib bin 'Abd Shams, a Companion of the Prophet.

¹⁰²⁹ Abu Bakr Kattani: see Note 855.

the troubles of other people." And another says: "It is not returning evil for evil," and so forth. All of these are its branches, but not its essence and totality. We shall disclose its true nature and the boundary of its totality.

Know that a human being has been created of two things: one is the body, which can be seen with the physical eye. The other is the soul, which cannot be perceived except by the eye of the soul. For each one of these two, there is goodness and unseemliness. One is called the beauty of creation; the other, the beauty of disposition. Beauty of disposition consists of the inner form, just as beauty of creation consists of the outer form. As the outer form is not good if only the eyes are good, or only the mouth is good, or only the nose is good, so that the eyes, mouth, and nose together are not good and not suited to one another; in the same manner, the inner form is not good so long as four powers in it are not good: the power of reason, the power of anger, the power of the carnal appetite, and the power of preserving equilibrium¹⁰³⁰ among the other three.

As for the power of reason, by that we mean sagacity,¹⁰³¹ the goodness of which is enough to easily distinguish between truth and lies in speech, (between) the good and the unseemly in deeds, and between the true and the false in principles of belief. When this perfection has been achieved by the human soul, thence wisdom comes into being, the source of all kinds of happiness, as God Most High said: *And he unto whom wisdom is given, he hath truly received abundant good.* (Q. 2:269)

The goodness of the power of anger is that it be under the command of wisdom and the Religious Law and arise at their command and end at their command.

The goodness of the power of the carnal appetite is that it not be rebellious and that it be under the command of the Religious Law and reason so that its obedience to them may be easy for it.

The goodness of the power of preservation of the equilibrium is that it keep anger and passion subjugated to the direction of religion and reason.

The similitude of anger is that of a hunting dog, the similitude of the carnal appetite is that of a horse, and the similitude of reason is that of a rider. A horse is sometimes refractory and sometimes obedient and trained. A dog is sometimes taught and sometimes it reverts to its own nature. Until the one is taught and the other trained, there is no hope for the rider's obtaining any game. Indeed, there is the fear that he will be killed, that the dog may attack him, or that the horse may throw him to the ground.

¹⁰³⁰ "equilibrium" (*ʿadl*): or "a just balance, justice."

¹⁰³¹ "sagacity" (*zīrakī*): or "shrewdness, perspicacity."

The meaning of preserving equilibrium is that both of these powers be obedient to reason and religion. Sometimes it makes appetite overpower anger in order to crush (anger's) rebellion; and sometimes it makes anger overcome appetite in order to crush (appetite's) greed. When all four are of this kind, a good disposition is absolute. If (only) some of them are good, this good disposition is not absolute. Just like the person who has a beautiful mouth and ugly eyes, or beautiful eyes and an ugly nose: the beauty is not absolute.

Know that if each one of them is unseemly, they give birth to ugly natures and ugly deeds. The unseemliness of each power has two aspects: one is that which arises from an excess which is too strong, the other from an insufficiency which is a deficit.

The power of knowledge, should it become excessive and involved in bad works, gives rise to deception and pedantry; while if it is deficient, it gives rise to foolishness and stupidity. However, when it is in balance, it gives rise to good planning, correct opinion, right thinking, and sound insight.

The power of anger, should it become excessive, is called impetuosity; while if it is deficient, it is called cowardice and spiritlessness. When it is in balance—not too much or too little—it is called courage. Courage gives rise to nobility, high-mindedness, bravery, mildness, patience, moderation, control of anger, and characteristics like these. From impetuosity come boasting, vanity, conceit, recklessness, vainglory, throwing oneself into dangerous affairs, and the like. From its deficiency come self-abasement, helplessness, apprehension, fawning, and abjectness.

The power of the carnal appetite, should it become excessive, is called gluttony. From it, arise impudence, foulness, unmanliness, uncleanness, jealousy, being despised by the powerful, being contemptuous of the poor, and the like. If it is deficient, lethargy, dastardliness, and dishonor (come). When it is in balance, it is called chasteness. From it, come modesty, contentment, patience, tolerance, grace, wit, and approval.

Each one of these (powers) has two extremes that are condemned and unseemly, but the medium is good and praiseworthy. That medium, between those two extremes, is narrower than a hair. That medium is its Straight Path. It is as narrow as the Bridge of the Hereafter. Whoever walks straight upon this bridge, is sure to (cross) that (other) Bridge tomorrow (in safety).

It is for this that God Most High has ordained the middle way in all characteristics. He has forbidden both extremes, and gives punishment (for them), saying: *And those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor grudging; and there is a firm station between the two.* (Q. 25:67) He praised the person who does not skimp in spending, nor is extravagant, but stands between the two. And the Messenger (S)

was told (by God): *And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck, nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.* (Q. 17:29) He said: "Do not tie up thy hand so as to give nothing, nor open it completely at one time and give away everything, lest thou be left without provisions and helpless."

So then, know that the absolutely good disposition is that in which all elements are balanced and correct within it, just as a beautiful countenance is that in which all of its parts are right and good. Now, in this regard there are four types of people:

One is he who achieves perfection in all of its attributes; he is the perfection of a good disposition. All creation must follow him. That is found in no one save (Muhammad) Mustafa (S), just as Joseph (A) was the paragon of physical beauty.

The second is that all of his attributes be most unseemly. This is the purely bad disposition. It is a duty to expel such a person from society, for he is close to the form of Satan, and Satan is at the extremity of unseemliness. The unseemliness of Satan is an internal unseemliness, and of (his) attributes and character.

The third is that one is between these two degrees, but closer to goodness.

The fourth is that one is the middle, but closer to unseemliness.

Just as with outward beauty where extreme goodness and extreme unseemliness are not common and most fall in between, so it is with a good disposition. Therefore, every one must make an effort so that, even if one does not achieve perfection, one comes nearer to the degree of perfection. If all of one's character is not good, well, some parts or more of it will be good. As there is no limit to the differences between beauty and ugliness, the same is true of one's character.

This is the whole meaning of a good disposition. It is not one thing, nor ten, nor a hundred; for it is much more. However, it originates with the powers of knowledge, anger, passion, and a just equilibrium: the rest are branches of it.

DISCLOSING THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE A GOOD DISPOSITION

Know that some have said that just as the external (appearance of) creation cannot be altered from the way it was created—short does not become long by machination, nor does long become short, or ugly beautiful—in the same way, the character which is an internal form cannot be altered. This is an error, for if that were correct, training, discipline, and giving advice and counsel would be useless. Did the Messenger (S) not say: "Make your character good"? How could (alteration) be impossible when dumb animals may be trained from their stubbornness with discipline and wild prey may be domesticated? But

this analogy, when applied to the disposition, is invalid because actions are of two kinds:

There are some that are not affected by human choice, just as a one cannot grow an apple tree from the stone of a date; but one can grow a date palm with the nurture and care that it the requires. In the same way, the roots of anger and carnal passion cannot be driven out of a human being. However, anger and carnal passion can be brought to the limit of moderation with discipline. This is made plain with experience. However, with respect to some people, it is more difficult. This difficulty arises for two reasons: one is that it has become stronger in the essence of one's innate nature, the second is that one has been in obedience to it for a long time, to the point that one is mastered by it. In this, people are at four degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is that one be simple. (This person) has not yet learned good from bad and has not yet become habituated to good or bad. However, he is at the beginning of (the formation of) his nature. He can be moulded and quickly corrected. He needs a person to teach him and to explain the detriment of bad character to him, and to show him the way. Children, at the beginning of their character development, are all like this. Then, their fathers and mothers open the way for them and make them greedy for the world. Then, they abandon them, so that they go about and live as they wish. The blood for their (loss of) religion is upon the necks of their mothers and fathers. It was for this that God Most High said: *Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire...* (Q. 66:6)¹⁰³²

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one has not yet become habituated to anything bad. However, one has made one's nature follow one's passion and anger for a time, yet one knows that that ought not to be done. His case is more difficult, for he is in need of two things: one is that he expel the corrupting nature from himself, the other is that he sow the seed of righteousness in it. However, if earnestness and necessity appear in him, he will be corrected quickly and his nature will abstain from corruption.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that (a person's) nature has been corrupted and he does not know that that should not be done, for (corruption) appears good to him. He will not be amenable to correction, except rarely.

THE FOURTH DEGREE it that, with all of this, (a person) glories in his corruption and supposes that it is some sort of skill, as the braggarts

¹⁰³² The full text of the verse is: *O ye who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire whereof the fuel is men and stones, over which are set angels strong, severe, who resist not God in that which He commands them, but do that which they are commanded.* (Q. 66:6)

who say: "We have killed so many people," or: "We have drunk so much wine." This person is incurable, unless some heavenly happiness¹⁰³³ touch him so that he is not taken down that path.

DISCLOSING THE MANNER OF TREATMENT

Know that for whoever desires to expel his bad disposition from himself, there is only one way, and that is that he do the opposite of whatever that (bad) disposition commands him (to do). The carnal appetite cannot be subdued except by opposition. Everything is overcome by its contrary, just as the treatment of an illness that causes heat is the consumption of cold (foods). The treatment of every illness that arises from anger is patience. The treatment of whatever arises from arrogance is humility. The treatment of whatever arises from miserliness is giving away wealth. The same (rule) is valid for all.

Consequently, a good disposition appears in anyone who has made a habit of good works. The inmost mystery of the command of the Religious Law to perform good works is that its purpose is the transformation of the soul from an unseemly form to a good form. Whatever habit a person does by compulsion becomes his nature. At the beginning, a child tries to escape from school and teaching, but when he is forced to study, it becomes his habit. When he grows up, all of his pleasure is in knowledge. He cannot keep himself away from it. Indeed, a person who has become habituated to gaming with pigeons, playing chess, or gambling—so that it becomes second-nature to him—will give all the comforts of the world and all that he has for those (pursuits) and cannot keep away from them. However, things that are contrary to one's temperament become of that temperament with (the formation) of habit.

There are people who take pride, out of being roving charlatans, in enduring being beaten with clubs and having their hands cut off. (There are) effeminates who, despite the despicableness of their deeds, glory in their effeminacy. Indeed, if one looks among barbers¹⁰³⁴ and sweepers, they too boast about their own work to each other among themselves, as do the learned and kings together. All these are the fruits of habit. Moreover, there is the person who has become accustomed to eating clay, and may become so that he cannot keep away from it and continues to endure illness and the danger of death (from it).

Therefore, since that which is contrary to nature becomes natural by habit, that which is consonant with one's nature, and becomes for the soul as food and drink is for the body. It is better that the habit of worship, the knowledge of God Most High, and devotion to Him be

¹⁰³³ That is, divine intervention.

¹⁰³⁴ "barbers": a barber (*hajjām*), in addition to the shaving and the cutting of hair, also let blood and was traditionally proficient in the practice of "cupping" with leeches.

acquired. Keeping anger and appetite under control is appropriate to human nature, for (that nature) is of the essence of the angels and (doing that) is his nourishment. He whose inclination is contrary to this has become sick so that his nourishment has become unpleasant to him. As for the sick person, it may be that he holds the nourishment in enmity while he becomes eager for that which is harmful to him.

Consequently, anyone who likes something more than the knowledge of God Most High and obedience to (Him) is ill. As God Most High said: *There is a sickness in their hearts.* (Q. 2:10) And He said: *Except him who comes to God with a sound heart.* (Q. 26:89) As the sick body is in danger of ruin in this world, so the sick soul is in danger of ruin in the next world. As there is no hope of recovery for the sick person, except that which is contrary to his own desires, he takes bitter medicine at the doctor's order. So, too, for the sick soul, there is no stratagem except opposition to the appetites of the self at the word of the Master of the Religious Law, the physician of the people's souls.

To summarize, physical medicine and spiritual medicine both have one method: the cooling of the hot, and the heating of the cold. In the same way, a person who is dominated by pride is cured by being compelled to be humble; and if a person is dominated by humility reaching the point of meanness, he is cured by being compelled to have (more) pride. Now, know thou that there are three causes for good character:

One is that it is innate. It is a gift and a favor from God Most High for a person to be created with an innately good disposition. For example, one is created generous, another is created humble, and there are many like that. The second is that one can force oneself to become accustomed to doing good works so that it becomes habitual. The third is that one sees persons whose character and deeds are good. One should associate with them so that one may necessarily take upon oneself those attributes, even if one is not aware of (the transformation).

He in whom these three felicities appear—having an innate good character, having association with the good, and making good works a habit—is at the degree of perfection. Whoever is deprived of these three things—one whose innate character is deficient, one who associates with scoundrels, and who makes a habit of evil deeds—is at the degree of perfect wretchedness.

Between these (two extremes), there are many degrees having more or less, and the happiness and wretchedness for each is according to their amounts. (*On that day people will come forth in sundry bodies that they may be shown their works.*) So he who does an atom's weight of

*good will see it. And he who does an atom's weight of evil will see it. (Q. 99:6-8)*¹⁰³⁵

EXCURSUS: [THE BEGINNING OF ALL (SPIRITUAL) HAPPINESS IS
TAKING PAINS IN (THE PERFORMANCE OF) GOOD DEEDS]

Know that actions are (the province) of the limbs of the body, but the objective (of actions) is the turning round of the soul, for it is the soul that will travel to the next world. Everything must be beautiful and perfect to be appropriate to the Divine Presence. It must be straight like an untarnished mirror to reflect the Heavenly Form in it and (for one) to see a Beauty that will beggar the descriptions of heaven that one has heard. Even though the body will also have a portion in that world, the soul is primary and the body secondary.

Know that the soul is one thing and the body another. The soul is of the celestial world and the body of the visible world. Thou hast learned this under that heading in (this) book.¹⁰³⁶

However, even though the body is separate from the soul, nonetheless it has a connection with it. For, from every good act of the body a light attaches itself to the soul, while from every bad act of the body a darkness attaches itself to the soul. That light is the seed of (spiritual) happiness and that darkness is the seed of (spiritual) misery. It is because of this connection that a person is brought to this world: in order that he make of his body a net and an instrument to acquire the attributes of perfection for himself.

Know that writing is an art that is an attribute of the soul, but its action is by the fingers. If a person desires that his handwriting be good, the method is that he continually write in a good hand so that the form of the writing becomes beautiful. When that is accomplished, the fingers begin to receive that shape from inside and to put it into the writing. So, in the same manner, from the external good act one's inner self begins to assume a good character. When good character has become an internalized attribute, then deeds assume the attributes of that character.

Therefore, the beginning of all (spiritual) happiness is taking pains in (the performance of) good deeds. The fruit of this is that the soul internalizes good qualities. Then, their light shines outside and good deeds begin to be accepted naturally and voluntarily. The secret of this is that connection which is between the soul and the body, for one affects the other and vice versa. It is for this that any act done negligently is in vain, for the soul has not given that act any part of its attributes because the soul was unaware of it.

¹⁰³⁵ Text cites only verses 7 and 8. We have added the preceding verse to make the context clear.

¹⁰³⁶ See the first section of the Third Topic of the Prolegomena.

EXCURSUS: [ALL GOOD CHARACTER MUST BECOME NATURAL
AND TAKING PAINS DEPART]

Know that the sick person whose illness is coldness should not eat things that are very hot, for it may be that the heat become an illness. Rather, there is a scale and a standard which must be observed. It must be known that the objective is that the temperament be equable: neither inclining to heat, nor inclining to cold. When it has reached the level of equability, the treatment is withdrawn and the effort becomes the maintenance of that balance. (The patient) eats temperate things.

In the same manner, all character has two aspects: one is praiseworthy and one is blameworthy. The objective is moderation. For example, we order the miser to give away wealth until it becomes easy for him, but not to the point of extravagance, for that is also blameworthy. But the scale for (weighing) that is from the Religious Law, just as the scale for (weighing) the treatment of the body is the science of medicine. He must become so that whatever the Law commands him to give, he gives, and its giving becomes easy for him and that there not be in him a demand to keep and hold on to (wealth). And whatever the Law commands him to keep, he should keep and the urge to give (of that) not be in him, so that he be moderate. Therefore, if those urges continue to appear in him—but he represses them by force—he is still ill. However, he is praiseworthy because he is indeed forcing himself to take his medicine and this compulsion is the way that (good character) will become natural to him.

It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: “Obey the command of God Most High: if ye cannot, then (obey Him) with displeasure, for there is much goodness in being patient.” Know that every person who forces himself to give away wealth is not generous. Rather, generous is the person for whom giving away wealth is easy. Whoever forces himself to retain wealth is not a miser. Rather, the miser is the person whose nature it is to keep (things).

Therefore, all character should be natural and taking pains should depart. Indeed, the perfection of character is that one surrender one’s reins to the hand of the Law and that obedience to it becomes easy. No struggle remains (against it) in one. As God Most High said: *But no, by thy Lord! They believe not until they make thee a judge of what is in dispute between them; then, they find not any straitness in their hearts...* (Q. 4:65) He said: “Their faith will be completed by making thee their judge, not retaining any heaviness or narrowness in their hearts.” There is a mystery for this to which a reference has been made even though this book could not contain (the mystery itself).

Know that the (spiritual) happiness of a human being is that one become of the nature of angels. For, one’s essence is of them and one has come into this world a stranger. One’s origin is the world of the angels.

Every foreign characteristic that one bears from here distances one from being in conformity with (the angels). When going to that place, one must become of their character and not carry any attributes from this place.

Whoever is avid for the preservation of wealth is obsessed with wealth and whoever is avid to spend it is also obsessed with wealth. Whoever is intent upon being haughty is obsessed with people and whoever is intent upon being humble is also obsessed with people. But the angels are neither obsessed with wealth, nor with people. Indeed, because of their love for the Divine Presence, they pay attention to nothing else.

Therefore, the connection of the human soul to wealth must be severed and cut off from people so that (the soul) may be cleansed of all of them. Any attribute that it is not possible for a person to eliminate should be kept at the (the level of) moderation, so that in one way it is as though it were eliminated. As water is not devoid of warmth or coldness, that which is tepid and equable resembles that which is devoid of both (extremes). Therefore, moderation and the mean in all qualities have been commanded because they are better.

So, the soul should be observed as to whether it is cut off from all and immersed in God Most High. As He said: *Say: I ask you not for any reward for (the Quran). It is naught but a Reminder to the nations.* (Q. 6:91) Indeed, the reality of *There is no god but God* is exactly this. Because it is not possible for a human being to be free of all contamination, He said: *And there is not one of you but shall come to it. This is an unavoidable decree of thy Lord.* (Q. 19:71)

Finally, from this, it is plain that end of all disciplines and the aim of all exertions is that a person reach the Unity of God: that he see it and naught else, that he read it and naught else, that he be obedient to it and naught else. In his inner being, no other urge remains. When it is thus, a good character has been achieved. Indeed, one has passed over from the world of mankind and reached the true nature of God.

EXCURSUS: [THE WAYS OF ACHIEVING A GOOD CHARACTER]

Know that ascetic self-discipline is a difficult and torturous¹⁰³⁷ task, but if the physician is a master and knows pleasant medicine for the way, it becomes much easier. It is the physician's grace that he does not call the disciple at first to the degree of the true nature of God, for he would not have the strength to endure that. If one says to a child: "Go to the school until thou reachest the level of principalship." (The child) does not know what the pleasure of principalship may be. Instead, one should

¹⁰³⁷ Literally: "the agony of death; the tearing out of the soul" (*jān kandan*).

say: "Go to the school and I shall give thee a stick and a ball tonight to play with," so that the child will go to school out of a desire for that. When he gets older, one persuades him with fine clothing and ornaments so that he will refrain from play. When he gets older, one promises him with mastership and chieftainship and says: "Silk clothing is for women." When he is older, then one says: "Mastership and chieftainship of the world have no basis, for death will destroy all of them." Then one promises him the everlasting kingdom.

Consequently, it may be that the student at the beginning of the task not be able to be completely sincere. One is tolerant with him so that he continue to strive in the eagerness that people will look upon him favorably, until one shatters the inclination to dissimulation, the greed of the belly, and the greed for wealth in him. When he has been liberated from those, a languor appears in him. Then, one must dispel the greed for that languor in him by commanding him to beg in the marketplace. When an acceptance of that appears in him,¹⁰³⁸ one should prevent that by engaging him in some menial tasks, such as cleaning lavatories, etc.

In the same way, one must gradually order the treatment for each characteristic that appears in him, (but) not all at once, for he would not be able to endure that. One can draw upon all kinds of afflictions for the inclination to dissimulation and fame. For example, all such characteristics are like serpents and scorpions. The similitude of dissimulation is the dragon that swallows everything. The last of the characteristics to depart from the truly righteous is that.

DISCLOSING THE METHOD FOR RECOGNIZING THE SICKNESS OF THE SOUL AND THE DEFECTS OF THE SELF

Know that just as the soundness of the body, hands, feet, and eyes lies in that each one of them be able to do completely that for which it was created—that the eye see well and the foot walk well; so the soundness of the soul lies in that the special quality, which is its original nature and for which it was created, be easy for it, and that it be the loving friend of that which is in its original nature.¹⁰³⁹

[THE SIGNS OF A SOUL'S SOUNDNESS]

This is found in two things, one in will and the other in power:

AS FOR THE WILL, in it there is nothing more preferred than God Most High, for the spiritual knowledge of God Most High is the

¹⁰³⁸ That is, when that humiliating task no longer affects him and he becomes indifferent to it.

¹⁰³⁹ "original nature" (*asl-i fitrat*): that is, the angelic essence.

nourishment of the soul, just as food is the nourishment of the body. A body from which the craving for food has departed or in which it has grown weak is sick. A soul from which the love for God Most High has departed, or in which it has grown weak, is sick. It is for this that God Most High said: *Say: If your fathers and your sons...* (Q. 9:24) "If ye love your fathers, your sons, your wives, your kinsfolk, and that which ye possess more than God Most High; be patient until the command of God Most High arrives and ye shall see!"¹⁰⁴⁰

AS FOR THE POWER, it is that obedience to God Most High has become easy and one finds no need to coerce oneself in that. Rather, it is in itself one's pleasure. As the Messenger (S) said: "*Formal prayer has become the light of my eyes.*"¹⁰⁴¹

Therefore, for a person who does not find these two qualities in himself, this is a certain symptom of his soul's sickness. He must attend to its treatment. It may be that he think that (his soul) possesses that character,¹⁰⁴² while it does not. For a person is (often) blind to his own faults.

And the defects of the self can be recognized in four ways:

One is that one resort to an experienced and mature spiritual guide so that that spiritual guide may examine him and disclose the person's defects to him. In this era, this is unusual and rare.

The second is that one have a sympathetic friend watch over oneself, one who will not conceal one's defects out of flattery, nor magnify them out of envy. This, too, is rare. Dawud Tayi (R) was asked: "Why dost thou not associate and mix with people?" He replied: "What is the point of associating with a people who see my faults and conceal them from me?"

The third is that one listen to the talk of one's enemies about oneself, for the eye of the enemy always falls upon the faults. Even if he exaggerates out of his enmity, his words are still not devoid of truth.

The fourth is that one should study people. One should constantly be on the watch for any defect in oneself that one sees in someone else. One should suspect one's self, for it may be the same.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Ghazzali introduces the verse (Q. 9:24) with its first words and then paraphrases it. The full text of the Quranic verse is thus: *Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your wives and your kinsfolk and the wealth you have acquired, and trade whose dullness you fear, and the dwellings you love, are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait until God brings His command to pass. And God guides not the transgressing people.*

¹⁰⁴¹ "*the light of mine eyes*": something beloved.

¹⁰⁴² "of that character": that is, "sound."

Jesus (A) was asked: "Who taught thee the rules of conduct?" He replied: "No one. I kept away from whatever I found unseemly in others." Know that the more foolish a person is, the more he considers himself good. The more intelligent one is, the more he suspects himself. 'Umar (R) used to ask Hudhayfah¹⁰⁴³ (R): "The Messenger (S) has told thee the secret of the hypocrites. What signs of hypocrisy dost thou find in me?" So, each person must seek out his own faults, for if he does not know the disease, he cannot remedy it.

All remedies meet the opposition of the carnal appetite. As God Most High said: *But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, lo! Paradise shall be his home.* (Q. 79:40-41)

The Messenger (S) used to say to the Companions when they returned from battle in defence of religion: "Ye have come from the lesser striving to the greater striving." They asked: "What is that?" He answered: "The striving against one's self." And the Messenger (S) said: "Restrain the torment of thyself from the self and do not give rein to its whims in disobedience to"¹⁰⁴⁴ God Most High Who will judge thee tomorrow and curse thee until thy parts all curse one another."

Hasan Basri (R) says: "There is no headstrong steed more difficult to rein in than the self." Sari Saqati (R) says: "For forty years, my self has wished me to dip a round cake into honey and eat it, but I have not yet done so."

Ibrahim Khawwas (R) says: "I was walking on Mount Lukkam in Lebanon¹⁰⁴⁵ and I saw many pomegranates. I felt a desire for some. I picked one. It was sour. I withheld my hand and went on my way. I saw a fallen man. Bees were collecting about him and stinging him. He said: 'Peace be upon thee, Ibrahim.' I asked: 'How didst thou know who I was?' He said: 'Nothing is concealed from whoever knows God Most High.' I said: 'I see that thou hast some state with God Most High. Why dost thou not ask Him to keep the bees away from thee?' He said: 'Thou

¹⁰⁴³ Hudhayfah: Hudhayfah bin al-Yaman, al 'Absi. Together with his brother and father, he embraced Islam at hands of the Prophet. Intelligent and energetic, he devoted himself to a study of evil and hypocrisy and was called the enemy of hypocrisy. Upon the death of the Muslim commander at the battle of Nihawand (in Iran), he took over and led the troops to victory over the Persians thereby opening Iran to Islam. He was the governor of Armenia for a while during the caliphate of 'Uthman. He died in AH36/656-7CE.

¹⁰⁴⁴ "in disobedience to" (*andar ma'siyat*): or "in sinning against." Disobeying God Most High is, of course, a sin.

¹⁰⁴⁵ "Mount Lukkam in Lebanon": A mountain, then so called, in western Syria that extends from the region of Hamah to Antakya (ancient Antioch) in Turkey. It should be remarked that the "Lebanon" of the reference does not coincide geographically with the modern state of Lebanon which was carved out of Syria in 1926 by the French in order to create a Christian-majority state in the Near East. Rather, it refers to the mountain system of that name.

too have a state. Why dost thou not ask that He take away the craving for pomegranates, for the wounds of the appetites are in the next world, and the wounds of the bees are in this world?"

Know that even though the pomegranate is lawful, yet the prudent have learned that the appetite for both the lawful and the unlawful is the same. If thou dost not shut the door of the lawful upon (the appetite) and thou dost not return it to the limit of necessity, it will seek the unlawful. For this reason, they have forbidden to themselves the appetites with respect to permitted things in order to escape appetite. As 'Umar (R) said: "I have refrained from seventy categories of lawful things out fear that I may fall into the unlawful."

Another reason is that when the self becomes accustomed to comfort and ease, it acquires a love for the permitted things of the world and the soul becomes attached to them, turning the world into its heaven. Death becomes difficult. Insolence and heedlessness appear in one's soul. When one engages in the remembrance (of God) and secret conversation (with God), one finds no pleasure in it. Since lawful passions keep him from this, he becomes discomfited and troubled. The world becomes hateful to him and an eagerness for the comfort of the Hereafter appears in (his soul). In a state of sorrow and broken-heartedness, a single glorification will have the effect upon his soul that hundreds (of glorifications) did not have when he was in a state of joy and ease.

The similitude of the self is the falcon that is trained by putting it into a chamber and covering its eyes in order to restrain it from all that was in it of its falcon-ness. Then, gradually, it will be given meat so that it may become familiar with the falconer and obedient to him. In the same way, the self does not find intimacy with God Most High so long as thou dost not wean it from all habits and dost not close off the eyes, tongue, and ears (to such things), and thou dost not discipline it with seclusion, hunger, silence, and sleeplessness. In the beginning, this will be difficult for it—just as when a child is weaned from milk. Afterwards, (the child) will become so that if one tries to give him milk by force, he will not be able to drink it.

Know that the spiritual discipline for every person is that he give up whatever it is that pleases him more and that he do the contrary of whatever (tendency) is more dominant. The person whose delight is in rank and pomp must abandon them. The one whose happiness is wealth must spend it. In the same way, one must forcibly sever oneself from any source of happiness other than God Most High. One must attend upon that which will attend upon one forever. One should abandon voluntarily all that one will abandon at death. One's attendant is God Most High, as God Most High revealed to David (A): "O David, I am thine attendant; be thou My attendant." And the Messenger (S) said: "Gabriel breathed into me (the words) *Love whom thou wilt; verily thou wilt be separated*

from him.” Love whomever thou wilt of the world, for he will be taken from thee. *Peace!*

DISCLOSING THE SIGNS OF A GOOD CHARACTER

Know that the signs of a good character are those which God Most High has described concerning the believers in the Quran in the first ten verses of the chapter beginning: *Successful indeed are the believers...* (Q. 23:1-10),¹⁰⁴⁶ and in the verse where He says: *Those who turn in repentance and those who serve (Him)...* (Q. 9:112),¹⁰⁴⁷ and in those verses where He says: *And the servants of the Compassionate are they who walk upon the earth modestly to the end (of the chapter)* (Q. 25:63-77).¹⁰⁴⁸

And whatever He has said about the signs of the hypocrites are the signs of a bad character. As the Messenger (S) said: “The aspiration of the believer is formal prayer, fasting, and worship, but the aspiration of the hypocrite is food and drink, like that of a dumb animal.” Hatim Asamm (R) says: “The believer is occupied with reflection and admonition, while the hypocrite (is occupied) with envy and expectation. The believer is safe from everyone save God Most High, while the hypocrite fears everyone save God Most High. The believer has no hope from anyone save God Most High, while the hypocrite has hopes from everyone save God Most High. The believer sacrifices his wealth for religion, while the hypocrite sacrifices his religion for wealth. The believer is always obedient and always weeping, while the hypocrite is always sinning and always laughing. The believer prefers solitude and seclusion, while the hypocrite prefers mixing and crowds. The believer always sows and fears that he not will not reap, while the hypocrite never sows and is ambitious to reap.”

And it has been said thus: “A person of good character is he who is modest, says little, causes little trouble, speaks the truth, seeks the good, worships much, has few faults, meddles little, desires the good for

¹⁰⁴⁶ The full text is: *Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers, and who shun vain conversation, and who are payers of the poor-rate and who guard their modesty—save from their wives or those their right hands possess, for then they are not blameworthy, but whoso craveth beyond that, such are transgressors—and who are shepherds of their pledge and their covenant, and who pay heed to their prayers: these are the heirs who will inherit Paradise. There they will abide.* (Q. 23:1-11) We have added the 11th verse to complete the passage.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Q. 9:112: *Those who turn in repentance and those who serve (Him), those who praise (Him), those who fast, those who bow down, those who fall prostrate (in worship), those who enjoin the right and who forbid the wrong and those who keep the limits (ordained) by God and give glad tidings to the believers!*

¹⁰⁴⁸ Q. 24:63-77: too long to quote here. A warning to wrong doers and a promise of Paradise to those who do good.

all, and does good works for all. He is compassionate, dignified, measured, patient, content, grateful, sympathetic, friendly, abstinent, and not greedy. He does not use foul language, nor does he exhibit haste, nor does he harbor rancor in his heart. He is not envious. He is candid, well-spoken, and his friendship and enmity, his anger and his pleasure are for the sake of God Most High and nothing more."

Know that good character usually comes from endurance and patience, just as when the Messenger (S) was much tormented and his teeth were broken, he said: "O Lord God! Show them the way for they do not know."

Ibrahim Adham (R) was crossing a plain. A soldier came to him and asked: "Art thou a slave?" He answered: "Yes." (The soldier) asked: "Where is there a town?" (Ibrahim) pointed to a cemetery. (The soldier) said: "I am looking for a settlement." (Ibrahim) said: "It is a settlement there." The soldier struck him with a club so hard that (Ibrahim) was covered with blood. The soldier grabbed him and dragged him to the city. When (Ibrahim's) friends saw him, they cried to the soldier: "Fool! This is Ibrahim Adham, the nonpareil of this epoch!" The soldier dismounted from his horse and kissed (Ibrahim's) feet. Then he asked him: "Why didst thou say thou wert a slave?" Ibrahim answered: "Because I am a slave of God Most High." (The soldier) asked: "Why didst thou indicate the cemetery as a settlement?" He said: "There is a promise for all there; therefore it is a settlement." The soldier said: "As I have behaved rudely, forgive me."¹⁰⁴⁹ Then Ibrahim said: "When he broke my head, I offered supplications for him." They asked: "Why?" He answered: "Because I knew that there would be spiritual reward for me because of him. I did not desire that my portion be better than his and his portion be worse than mine."

Abu 'Uthman Hiri¹⁰⁵⁰ was invited by someone to test him. When he arrived at the door of the house, (the host) did not allow him to enter, saying: "There is nothing left." (Abu 'Uthman) went back. After he had gone a short distance, (the host) came after him and called him to come back. (Abu 'Uthman) returned. When he arrived at the door of the house, (the host) would not admit him and said the same thing. (Abu 'Uthman) left. (The host) did this several times: his calling (Abu 'Uthman), (Abu 'Uthman's) arriving and then being turned away and his departure. (The host) said: "What a good character thou hast!" (Abu 'Uthman) said: "That which thou hast seen of me is the character of a dog. When thou

¹⁰⁴⁹ "Forgive me": literally, "Make it lawful for me" (*marā dar hall kun*).

¹⁰⁵⁰ Abu 'Uthman Hiri: Sa'īd bin Ismā'īl al-Hiri, Abū 'Uthmān al-Nisābūrī. There are many references to him in Qushayrī. Hujwiri credits him the spread of Sufism in Nishapur and Khorasan. He associated with Yahya bin Mu'adh (see Note 778), Abu Hafṣ (see Note 1702), Shah Shuja' Kirmani, Junayd (see Note 468), and many others of the period. He died AH298/910-11CE.

callest him, he comes; when thou drivest him away, he goes. How valuable is that?"

One day someone emptied a basin of ashes from a roof on (Abu 'Uthman Hiri's) head. He wiped off his clothing and gave thanks. He was asked: "Why didst thou give thanks?" He said: "It is a cause for thanks when peace is made with a person who deserves Fire with ashes."

'Ali bin Musa al-Rida¹⁰⁵¹ (A) had a dark color. By the door of his residence in Nishabur, there was a bathhouse. When he used to go the bathhouse, they would empty it. One day, they emptied the bathhouse and he went into it. The bathhousekeeper was inattentive. A villager entered the bath. Seeing ('Ali bin Musa), he thought that he was an Indian, a servant of the bath. (The villager) said: "Get up! Bring water!" ('Ali bin Musa) brought some water. Then (the villager) said: "Get up and bring some clay."¹⁰⁵² He brought some. (The villager) continued to issue orders and ('Ali bin Musa) continued to execute them. When the bathhousekeeper returned and heard the villager addressing ('Ali bin Musa), he grew afraid and fled. When ('Ali bin Musa) came out of the bath, he was told that the bathhousekeeper had fled out of fear because of the incident. ('Ali bin Musa) said: "Tell him not to flee. The offense was his who gave his seed to a black serving girl."

'Abdullah the Tailor¹⁰⁵³ (R) was of the great ones of his age. A Magian¹⁰⁵⁴ used to order garments from him every year and pay him each time with adulterated silver. He would accept it and say nothing. One time he was absent and his apprentice refused to accept the adulterated silver coins. When ('Abdullah) came back, he asked: "Why didst thou do that? He has been doing that to me for many years and I have not tasked him with it. I accepted (the false money) so that (another) Muslim would not be deceived by that bad money and so that I could bury it."

Uways Qarani (R) used to go walking and some children would throw stones at him. He would say: "Indeed! Throw small stones lest my legs be broken and I not be able to stand to perform formal prayer." Someone used to insult Ahnaf Qays (R). (That person) would go along with him and (Ahnaf) would remain silent. When he approached his own

¹⁰⁵¹ 'Alī bin Mūsā al-Ridā: Abū al-Hasan 'Alī bin Mūsā, the eighth Imam of the Shīahs, whose tomb at Mashhad in northeastern Iran is a great center of pilgrimage (Harun al-Rashid is buried in the same precincts), was born at Madinah AH148/765CE and died in Khorasan AH203/818CE, possibly by poisoning. He was possessed of learning, piety, and a pleasant personality that attracted many followers.

¹⁰⁵² "clay" (*gil*): A special clay used to wash the body in public baths.

¹⁰⁵³ 'Abdullah the Tailor: 'Abdullāh al-Khayyāt. (*Khayyāt* means "tailor" in Arabic; the Persian word is *darzī*, which Ghazzali employs.) Qushayri relates the same anecdote.

¹⁰⁵⁴ "a Magian" (*gabr*): a term usually applied to the Zoroastrians who were also called "fire worshippers." It was sometimes extended more generally to include pagans and unbelievers. The Biblical "*Magi*" comes from the Persian *majūs*, which is perhaps somewhat more specifically related to the Zoroastrians.

tribe, he stood and said to that person: "If thou hast anything more to say, say it here; for if my people hear thee, they will injure thee." A woman said to Malik Dinar: "O hypocrite!" He replied: "The people of Basrah had lost my name; thou hast found it again!"

These are the signs of the perfection of good character that those people had. They are the qualities of persons who, by self-discipline, have totally cleansed themselves of the qualities of (their) human nature and see nothing except God Most High. Whatever they see, they see as from Him. A person who, because of his self, does not see this, nor any little thing resembling it, must not deceive himself and suppose himself to have a good character. *Peace!*

DISCLOSING THE RAISING AND TRAINING OF CHILDREN

Know that a child is a trust in the hands of the mother and father. His pure soul is a precious substance that may be moulded like wax. It is a *tabula rasa*. It is like clean earth that will grow any seed thou throwest into it. If thou sowest a good seed, it will achieve the happiness of religion and the world, and the mother, father, and teacher will share in the spiritual reward of that. If it is its the opposite, then (the child) will be miserable and they will share in whatever (misfortune) comes to him. God Most High says: *Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire.* (Q. 66:6) Preserve yourselves and your children from the fire of hell. It is more important to protect your children from the fire of hell than from the fire of this world.

Protecting him is by means of training him, instilling a good character in him, and protecting him from bad companions, for the origins of all kinds of corruption arise from bad companions. He should not be habituated to comfort and ease and to wearing fine clothing, for then he will not be able to do without them and will waste his entire life in trying to get them. Rather, one should try from the very beginning, so that the woman whose milk he drinks should be righteous, of good character, and one whose subsistence is lawful, because a bad character spreads from the wet nurse, and the milk that is produced from unlawful nourishment is unclean. The flesh and skin of the child develops from (that unlawful milk) and an affinity to that (unlawfulness) will develop in his nature that will become apparent after puberty.

When (the child) begins to talk, his first word must be "God" (*Allāh*), and this must be continually prompted to him. When he begins to feel shame about some things, this is good news and the proof that the enlightening rays of reason have fallen upon him. He makes a policeman out of the shame that embarrasses him at every unseemliness.

The first thing that will be discovered in (the infant) is a voracious appetite for nourishment. One must begin teaching him the behavior of eating so that he eats with the right hand, saying: "In the

name of God.” (He should) not eat rapidly, and chew small bites; nor should he look at what others are eating, nor take another morsel in his hand until he has swallowed that one in his mouth. (He should) not soil his hand and clothing. From time to time, give him plain bread so that he not become habituated to stew. One should make over-eating appear unseemly to him and say: “That is the way of dumb animals and the unwise.” One should criticize a child who eats too much in his presence and praise a child who eats little and observes the rules of etiquette in his presence, so that the vein of pride may pulse in him and he too become like that.

One should make white clothing seem good to his eye, and one should hold silken and colored clothing blameworthy to his eye, saying: “Those are the affair of women and lovelies, and self-adornment is the affair of the effeminate, not the affair of men.” One should take care that children wearing silk garments and enjoying comfort and ease do not fall in with him¹⁰⁵⁵ and that he does not see them; for that will be his ruin as he will also desire them. One should keep (the child) from bad companions. Every child not so guarded will become impudent, lying, stubborn, and reckless. These (qualities) will not depart from his nature for a long time.

When he is handed over to school, he will learn the Quran. After that, he studies the Traditions, the stories of the saints, and the lives of the Companions and the forefathers. Of course, one does not permit him to occupy himself with verses in which there is talk of love and the characteristics of women. One should guard him from the teacher who says: “One’s nature becomes refined with that.” He is not a teacher, rather, he is a devil who is sowing the seed of corruption in (the child).

When the child is working well and a good character appears in him, he should be praised and one should give him something to make him happy, and one should praise him before others. However, if he makes a mistake once or twice, it should be overlooked so that words (of admonition) not become ineffectual, especially if (the error) is not public. If one talks too much to him, he will become emboldened and commit (the mistake) openly. When he continues to repeat (the mistake), one should reprimand him privately, saying: “Take care that no one learn this about thee, for thou wilt be disgraced among the people and thou wilt be held of no account.” The father should keep his dignity with him and the mother should make him fear his father.

One should not permit him to sleep during the day; he will become lazy. So that his body will grow strong, he should not sleep upon soft bedclothes at night. One should not prevent him for playing an hour

¹⁰⁵⁵ Him: the prohibition of silk clothing, etc., applies only to males. Girls and women may wear silk.

everyday so that he will become well-trained and not become gloomy; that leads to a bad nature and to his becoming dull. One should make him accustomed to being humble with all persons and to refrain from boasting or bragging to other children.

He should not accept anything from (other) children. Rather, he should give to them. He should be told: "Accepting (things) is the work of beggars and those lacking in good ambition." He should, of course, not open himself to the appetite for gold, silver, and goods that he receives from another person, for he will be spoiled by that and fall into unbecoming habits.

One should teach him that he should not to spit or blow the fluid out of his nose in the presence of others. He should not turn his back upon people. He should sit properly and not put his hand under his chin, for that is the proof of indolence. He should not talk much and, of course, not swear oaths. He should not speak until addressed. He should respect those older than he, and he should not approach them (on his own). He should eschew curses and foul language. If the teacher beats him, one should tell him not to cry out, complain too much, or rouse an intercessor. He should be patient and say: "This is the work of men. Crying aloud is the work of women and serving girls."

When he is seven years old, he should be ordered to perform the formal prayers and observe the rules of purification. When he is ten years old, if he misses formal prayer, one should beat and correct him. One should make theft, eating the unlawful, and lying unseemly in his eyes and always treat them with contempt.

If he is brought up like this, he is told the underlying reasons for these rules of conduct when he achieves puberty: "The object of food is that it give strength to the servant for devotion to God Most High. The purpose of the world is the acquisition of the provisions for Hereafter—for the world does not remain with a person and death comes unexpectedly—so that one may achieve Paradise and the pleasure of God Most High. One begins to describe heaven and hell and the spiritual reward or punishment for deeds to him. If he has been reared with good training from the beginning, these words will be as though engraved upon stone (for him). If he has been left on his own, (these words) will fall to the ground like dust from a wall.

Sahl Tustari (R) says: "I was three years old when I used to watch my maternal uncle, Muhammad (bin) Suwar,¹⁰⁵⁶ when he performed the evening obligatory formal prayer. One time, he said to me: 'Dost thou not remember that God who created thee at all, lad?' I said: 'How do I do that?' He said: 'When thou gettest into thy bedding at

¹⁰⁵⁶ **Muhammad (bin) Suwār:** As the uncle of Sahl Tustari (see Note 779), he would have been active in the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century.

night, say three times—in thy heart, not aloud—“God Most High is with me. God Most High is watching me. God Most High sees me.” I said: ‘I have been saying that for a number of nights.’ Then he said: ‘Say it seven times every night.’ I did that; then he said: ‘Say it fifteen times every night.’ I did that and then the sweetness of that fell into my heart. After a year, he said to me: ‘Remember what I have told thee all thy life, until that time when they place thee in thy grave. It will hold thy hand in this world and the next.’ I continued to repeat (his words) for a number of years until their sweetness appeared in my conscience. Then, one day, my uncle said to me: ‘Whomever God is with and whomever He observes and whomever He sees does not sin. Take care that thou dost not sin, for He sees thee.’

“Then I was sent to a school. I was upset. I said: ‘Do not send me (there) for more than an hour every day.’ That was until I had learned the Quran; I was seven years old. When I was ten, I continually fasted and ate barley bread until I was twelve. In my thirteenth year, a question entered my soul. I said: ‘Send me to Basrah so that I may ask the religious scholars of Basrah.’ I was sent there. I asked all of the religious scholars, but they could not resolve it. I went to ‘Abbadan¹⁰⁵⁷ where a man had been suggested to me. He resolved my problem. I stayed with him for a while, then I came to Tustar¹⁰⁵⁸ and I bought some barley with a silver dirham, breaking my fast with barley bread without any stew or sauce. I made do with that silver dirham for a year. Then, I decided to go three days and nights without eating anything in order to inure myself to that. Then, I did it for a five-day period, then seven days, until I was able to fast for twenty-five days and nights without eating anything. I endured this for twenty years and remained awake at night (in prayer and supplication).”

This story has been related so that it may become plain that the seed for every great deed is sown in childhood. *Peace!*

DISCLOSING THE PREREQUISITES OF THE DISCIPLE AT THE OUTSET OF HIS EARNEST STRIVING AND THE MANNER OF HIS TREADING THE PATH OF RELIGION WITH SELF-DISCIPLINE

Know that the reason for someone's not reaching God is that he has not traveled the path. The reason for someone's not traveling the path is that he has not sought it. The reason for someone's not seeking it is that he did not know, and his belief was incomplete. Indeed, the desire for the quest for the provisions of the Hereafter appears in whoever knows that the world causes misery and is but of a few days in duration.

¹⁰⁵⁷ ‘Abbadān: Modern Ābādān in southwestern Iran.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Tustar: Modern Shūshtar in southwestern Iran.

while the Hereafter is pure and everlasting. It is not a hardship for him to exchange something despicable for something valuable. Putting down the earthen jug so that tomorrow one will receive a golden jug is not very difficult.

Therefore, the cause of all of this is the weakness of faith, and the cause of the weakness of faith is the disappearance of guides who lead and guide the way of the abstemious religious scholar. None of these are left. As there are no leaders and guides, the way remains empty and people have been deprived of their (spiritual) happiness. Those who are left of the religious scholars, their hearts have been overcome by the love of the world. Since they are in search of the world, how can they summon the people from the world to the Hereafter? The way of the world is opposite to the way of the Hereafter. The world and the Hereafter are like the East and the West; to whichever thou drawest closer, thou goest farther away from the other.

Consequently, if the desire for God Most High appears in someone, and he is one of those about whom God Most High says: *And he who desires the Hereafter...* (Q. 17:19), he should know what the effort is when He continues: *...and strives for it with the effort necessary.* (Q. 17:19)¹⁰⁵⁹ Know that this effort¹⁰⁶⁰ is the traveling of the way! The traveler must first possess certain requisites that he has previously acquired; then, there is the document that he must hold firmly; then, there are a fortress and a castle that will give him refuge.

[THE VEILS BETWEEN GOD AND THE CREATED]

It is a prerequisite that one first lift the veil between the self and God so as not to be one of those people about whom God Most High says: *We have set a barrier before them and a barrier behind them (and have covered them so that they see not).* (Q. 36:9) The veils are four: wealth, rank, following precedent, and sin.

As for WEALTH, it is a veil when it engages the soul. The way cannot be traveled except with an unencumbered soul. Wealth must be removed except for that necessary amount so that it will not preoccupy (one). If there is someone who has nothing and another takes care of him, his way will be completed more quickly.

As for the veil of RANK AND POMP, one must arise and flee from them. One must go to some place where one is not known. If one is well-known, one will always be engaged with people and with the pleasure of

¹⁰⁵⁹ The complete verse runs: *And he who desires the hereafter and strives for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such, their effort finds favor (with their Lord).* (Q. 17:19)

¹⁰⁶⁰ "effort" (sa'ya): This is the same word that is used for the running between the hills of Safa and Marwah during the Greater and Lesser Pilgrimages.

their reception (of him). Whosoever's pleasure is derived from people will not reach God.

As for FOLLOWING PRECEDENT, it is a veil because if one believes in someone's school of law and hears its words in the way of argument, one gives no place to anything else in his heart. One must forget that and believe in the meaning of *There is no god but God and* that one must seek the fulfillment of that in oneself. The fulfillment of that is that one has no object of worship that he obeys except God Most High. Whoever is overcome by passion, that passion is one's object of worship. When this state becomes (one's) true nature, one must seek the discovery of affairs by earnest striving, not by argument.

As for SIN, it is the greatest veil. The soul of whoever perseveres in sin is dark. How can God be revealed to him? Especially (the consumption of) forbidden food, for it annihilates the effect that lawful food makes in illuminating the soul. In reality, one must beware of the forbidden morsel and consume only lawful food.¹⁰⁶¹ Anyone who wishes that the mysteries of religion and the Religious Law be unveiled to him before he observes and implements the externals of the Law in dealings is like the person who wishes to read the commentaries on the Quran before he has learned Arabic.

[THE GUIDE OF THE WAY]

When these veils have been pulled away, (one's) similitude is that of the person who has performed the obligatory purification and is prepared to perform the (obligatory) formal prayer. Now, he needs an imam to lead him (in performing the prayer). That is the spiritual guide (*pīr*), for without a spiritual guide, traveling the path will not be direct. The path to God is hidden and mixed with the paths of Satan. The path to God is one, but there are a thousand paths to the false. How will it be possible to travel that (one) path without a guide? When one has found his spiritual guide, he must put all of his affairs in (the guide's) hands and set aside control over himself. He must know that his profit in the spiritual guide's error will be greater than in his own correctness. Whatever he hears from the spiritual guide that he does not understand should remind him of the story of Moses and Khidr.¹⁰⁶² (A). That story is for the spiritual guide and his disciple, for the shaykhs know things which the mind (of the disciple) cannot entertain.

¹⁰⁶¹ Of course, Ghazzali is not only referring to forbidden foods and drinks such as pork and alcohol, but also food and drink which has been obtained unlawfully through extortion, oppression, overcharging, and the like.

¹⁰⁶² "the story of Moses and Khidr": See Note 902 on Khidr.

In the time of Galen,¹⁰⁶³ someone developed a pain in a finger of his right hand. Physicians of insufficient knowledge applied medicine to that finger, but there was no improvement. Galen applied some medicine to (the man's) left shoulder. They said: "What kind of nonsense is this? The pain is here and the medicine is there! What use is that?" The finger got better. The reason was that (Galen) knew that the defect had occurred in the main nerve, and he knew that nerves spring from the brain and the spine, and that which comes from the left goes to the right, and that which comes from the right goes to the left. The point of this example is that it be known that no control must remain within the disciple.

I heard about Khwajah Abu 'Ali Farmudhi¹⁰⁶⁴ (R) that he said: "Once I was recounting a dream to my shaykh, Abu al-Qasim Gurgani¹⁰⁶⁵ (R) who was my spiritual guide. He grew angry and did not speak to me for a month. I did not know any cause for that until the time he said: 'During the telling of the story of the dream thou saidst: "Thou, who art a shaykh, spoke to me thus in a dream. (In the dream), I asked thee: "Why?"'" He said: 'If inside thee there had been no room for "Why?" thou wouldst not have uttered it in a dream.'"

Therefore, when the affair is entrusted to the spiritual guide, the first act of the spiritual guide is to place one in a fortress so that evils do not circle around him. That fortress has four walls: one is seclusion, another is silence, another is hunger, and another is wakefulness. Hunger closes the way of Satan, sleeping little illuminates the soul, silence keeps the soul from the distraction of talk, and seclusion turns away the darkness of people from him and closes the way to the eyes and ears. Sahl Tustari (R) says: "The saints who have become saints became so by seclusion, hunger, silence, and wakefulness."

When one has arisen out of the path of preoccupation, one starts to travel on the path. The beginning of the path is that one start to overcome the first obstacles of the path. The obstacles of the path are the blameworthy qualities in the soul. They are the root of the things from which one must flee—such as the greed for wealth and rank, the greed for comfort, haughtiness, hypocrisy, and the like—until the materials of distraction are cut off from within and the soul is empty (of them). It may happen that a person be emptied of all of these until he is not polluted by more than one (blameworthy quality). Then he must strive to sever that one by the means that the shaykh approves and considers more suited (to him), for these vary with conditions.

¹⁰⁶³ Galen: see Note 985 above.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Khwājah Abū 'Alī Fārmudhī: Mentioned in *Tadhkirat al-Awliya* and *Kashf al-Mahjub*. In the latter, he is lauded as a disciple and the pious successor of Abū al-Qasim bin 'Alī bin 'Abdullāh al-Gurgānī in Sufism. This would make him active sometime in the 4th Islamic (10th CE) century, or slightly later.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Abu al-Qasim Gurgani: See Note 915 on Khwajah Abu al-Qasim Gurgani.

Now that he has cleared the field, the sowing of seed begins. The seed is the remembrance of God Most High, since he has been emptied of all save Him. Then he sits in seclusion and continually recites *Allāh*, *Allāh* in his soul and with his tongue until the time when the tongue falls silent and the soul begins to speak. Then the soul, too, ceases to speak and the meaning of the word overwhelms the soul. The significance is not in the letters.¹⁰⁶⁶ It is not Arabic or Persian, for speaking with the soul is also speech. Speech is the sheathe and the husk of the seed, not the seed itself. Then, the import of that must become firmly established in the soul, dominating and victorious, so that the soul not be forced to that (state). Rather, it should become like a lover from which the soul cannot be held back by force. Shibli¹⁰⁶⁷ said to his disciple, Husri:¹⁰⁶⁸ "If from Friday to Friday when thou comest to me, thou lettest anything pass in thy soul other than God Most High, thy coming to me will be unlawful."

So, when the soul has been cleared of the thorns of worldly temptations and the seeds have been planted, nothing still remains that is related to free choice. (The soul) has chosen to be there (in that condition). After that, one remains waiting for what will grow and appear. Usually the seed is not wasted, for God Most High says: *Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We give him increase in his harvest.* (Q. 42:20) He says: "Whoever cultivates the work of the Hereafter and sows the seed, We shall bestow increase upon him."

From this point, the conditions of disciples are various: There is the person to whom the meaning of the word begins to appear plainly, but spurious imaginings come to him. There is the person who is delivered from these, but the essence of the angels and the spirits of the prophets begin to appear to him in beautiful forms, as though he were dreaming. He opens his eyes and still sees them. After that, there are other states, the discussion of which would be lengthy. There is no benefit in relating them because the way is for traveling, not speaking. Each person has a different experience. For whoever desires to travel that path, it is better than he not have heard anything about it, so that expectation not occupy his soul and (itself) become a veil.

That amount which may be learned through study is up to this point. The purpose of this discourse is that belief in (such a state) may

¹⁰⁶⁶ "letters" (*ḥurūf*): or, "words."

¹⁰⁶⁷ Shibli: Abū Bakr Dulaf bin Jahdār al-Shibli, a great Sufi. A provincial governor, he abandoned the world at the age of 40. Of Khorasani origin, he was born in Samarra in Iraq, and died at Baghdad AH334/946CE.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Husri: Abū Saʿīd al-Sūfī, a Muʿtazilite, who lived in the first part of the 10th century. Of several men by the name of al-Husri, he is the most likely to be the one mentioned by Ghazzali. Qushayri mentions another Husri, Abū ʿAbdullāh Husrī, but he was an associate of Fath Mawsili (see Note 843), about a century earlier than Shibli. (See preceding note.)

appear, for most of the religious scholars deny it and do not believe anything that surpasses ordinary learning.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCERNING THE OBSTACLES ON THE PATH OF RELIGION: THE APPETITES OF THE STOMACH AND THE GENITALIA

Know that the belly is the tank of the body, and the vessels coming out of it to the seven members are like channels (of irrigation). The source of all appetites is the belly. This is the most common appetite that befalls a descendant of Adam, for Adam fell out of heaven because of it. Then, this appetite is the origin of all other appetites, for when the belly is replete, the appetite for sexual intercourse begins to become active. The appetites of the belly and the genitals cannot be addressed without money; hence, the greed for wealth appears. Wealth cannot be obtained except with rank and retinue, so the greed for rank appears. Wealth and rank cannot be preserved except by antagonizing people. From this envy, bigotry, enmity, pride, dissimulation, hatred, and dispute all appear.

[THE REMEDY FOR THE APPETITE OF THE STOMACH]

Therefore, giving free rein to the stomach is the source of all sins, while controlling the belly and accustoming oneself to hunger is the source of all good.

In this chapter, we shall (first) discuss the virtue of hunger, then we shall speak of the benefits of hunger. Then, we shall explain the manner of self-discipline in eating little. Then, we shall describe the different circumstances of people with respect to that. Then, we shall discuss the great harm of dissimulation in eating little. Then, we shall discuss the great harm of the lusts of the genitalia and the spiritual reward for a person who guards against them.

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL REWARD OF HUNGER

The Messenger (S) said: "Strive against your selves with hunger and thirst, for the spiritual reward of that is like the spiritual reward of striving in battle against the unbelievers. There is no behavior more pleasing to God Most High than hunger and thirst." And he (S) said: "Whoever fills his stomach will not be admitted to the heavenly kingdom." The Messenger was asked: "Who is the most superior person?" He (S) replied: "He who eats little, laughs little, and is content with breeches."¹⁰⁶⁹ And he (S) said: "The lord and the senior of all acts is

¹⁰⁶⁹ breeches: literally, "covering the privates" (*‘awrat-pūsh*). The absolute minimum of clothing (for a male).

hunger." And he (S) said: "Wear clothing. Eat and drink until the belly is half-full, for that is a portion of prophethood." And he (S) said: "Reflection is one half of worship; eating sparingly is the other half of worship." And he said: "The most virtuous of you to God Most High is (the person) whose meditation and hunger are lengthy. The most inimical of you to God Most High is (the person) who eats much, drinks much water, and sleeps much." And he said: "God Most High boasts to the angels of the person who eats little, saying: 'Look! I have afflicted him with the appetite for food and he withholds (from it) for My sake. Bear witness, O angels! For every bite that he has passed up, I shall give him a degree in heaven.'" And he (S) said: "Deaden not your souls with quantities of food and drink, for the soul is like a sown field; if it is over-watered, (the plants) will die." And he (S) said: "A man fills no container full worse than the stomach. A few bites will suffice for a person to keep his back straight. If there is no remedy, then one third of the stomach is for food, one third for drink, and one third for breath." According to another version: "One third for remembrance."

Jesus (A) said: "Keep yourselves hungry and naked so that it may be that your souls will see God."

Our Messenger (S) said: "Satan flows inside the body of a person like blood in the veins. Make his passage difficult with hunger." And he (S) said: "The believer eats with one intestine; the hypocrite with seven." This means that the carnal appetite and eating of the hypocrite is seven times that of the believer.

'Ayishah (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "'Continually knock on the door of heaven until your door is opened.' I asked: 'O Messenger of God! With what shall I knock?' He said: 'Hunger and thirst.'" Abu Juhayfah¹⁰⁷⁰ belched in the presence of the Messenger (S). He said: "Keep thy belch at a distance, for whoever is more sated in this world will be more hungry in the next."

'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) never sated himself with food. I used to feel compassion for him because of (his) hunger. I would lay my hand on his stomach and say: 'My body is thy sacrifice! What will happen if thou eatest enough of this world not be hungry?' He said: 'O 'Ayishah! The prophets of highest resolve, my brethren¹⁰⁷¹ who have preceded me, have obtained grace from God Most High. I fear that if I enjoy comfort and ease, my degree will be less than their degree. I prefer being patient with little for a few days to having my delight less in the Hereafter. Nothing is dearer to me than reaching my brethren.'" 'Ayishah (R) says: "By God and His Messenger! He did not live more than a week after (saying) that."

¹⁰⁷⁰ Abū Juhayfah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁰⁷¹ "brethren": that is, the prophets and messengers.

Fatimah (R), holding a piece of bread in her hand, went to the Messenger (S). He asked: "What is that?" She replied: "A loaf of bread that I baked that I could not eat without thee." He said: "This is the first food that will enter thy father's mouth in three days." Abu Hurayrah (R) says: "They never ate bread made of wheat for three days together during the time of the Messenger (S)."

Abu Sulayman Darani (R) says: "I prefer to eat one morsel less of the evening meal than to perform formal prayer throughout the night until morning." Fudayl¹⁰⁷² (R) used to say to himself: "What art thou afraid of? Art thou afraid that thou will remain hungry? What an idea, that God Most High would give hunger to Muhammad, his Companions, and withhold it from thee and the likes of thee!" Kahmas¹⁰⁷³ (R) said: "O Lord God! Thou keepest me hungry and naked. Thou keepest me with Thyself long nights in seclusion. How have I achieved this station with Thee? For Thou doest this with Thine Own friends."

Malik Dinar said: "Blessed is the person who possesses enough grain to suffice his needs and to be independent of people." Muhammad Wasi¹⁰⁷⁴ (R) said: "No! Blessed is the person who is hungry in the morning and hungry in the evening and with whom God Most High is pleased."

Sahl Tustari said: "The saints and the wise have searched and found nothing more beneficial in religion and the world than hunger and found nothing more harmful to the Hereafter than satiety." 'Abd al-Wahid Zayd¹⁰⁷⁵ said: "God Most High has not befriended any person except by means of hunger. No one has walked upon water except by means of hunger. No one has rolled up the earth so as to travel a hundred parasangs¹⁰⁷⁶ in a night except by means of hunger. In the Traditions, it is related that Moses (A), during those forty days when God Most High wished to talk with him, ate nothing.

DISCLOSING THE BENEFITS OF HUNGER AND THE AFFLICTIONS OF SATIETY

Know that the merit of hunger does not lie in that there be anguish, just as the merit of medicine does not lie in its bitterness. However, in hunger there are ten benefits:

¹⁰⁷² Fudayl: Fudayl 'Iyad, see Note 670.

¹⁰⁷³ Kahmas: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Muhammad Wasi': Muhammad bin Wasi', see Note 669.

¹⁰⁷⁵ 'Abd al-Wahid Zayd: 'Abd al-Wahid bin Ziyād, Abū 'Ubaydah, a disciple of Hasan al-Basri (see Note 398) who began as a vendor of palm leaves and became an important preacher and ascetic. He died AH128-9/745C E.

¹⁰⁷⁶ A hundred parasangs: approximately 300 miles.

THE FIRST BENEFIT is that it purifies and illuminates the soul, while satiety blinds people's souls and makes them dull of thought. A vapor moves from the gut to the brain which stupefies people so as to confuse thought. Concerning this, the Messenger (S) said: "Enliven your souls by laughing little. Cleanse (them) with hunger so until they become finely pure." And he (S) said: "Whoever keeps himself hungry becomes astute and his thoughts become great." Shibli (R) said: "There was never a day when I sat hungry for the sake of God that I did not receive some new wisdom or lesson in my soul." The Messenger (S) said: "Do not sate yourselves with food, for the light of spiritual knowledge will be extinguished in your souls." Then, since spiritual knowledge is the way to Paradise and hunger is the threshold of spiritual knowledge, being hungry is knocking on the door of heaven, as he (S) said: "*Continue the knocking at the door of Paradise with hunger.*"

THE SECOND BENEFIT is that the soul becomes refined so that it finds pleasure in the remembrance (of God) and conversation (with God). Harshness and hardness of the soul arise from satiety so that every remembrance made is made with the tongue and does not enter the soul. Junayd (R) says: "Each one of you has placed a feed bag crammed with victuals between yourself and God Most High. Then, ye want to find the pleasure of conversation (with God)! This will never happen."

THE THIRD BENEFIT is that while arrogance and negligence are the gates of hell; humility, helplessness, and weakness are the thresholds of heaven. Satiety brings arrogance and heedlessness, while hunger brings weakness and humility. So long as the servant does not look at himself with the eye of weakness—by missing one bite, the world becomes straitened and dark for him—he will not see the majesty and power of God. It was for this that key to the treasures of the world was offered to the Messenger (S) and he said: "I do not want it, but for a day of satiety and a day of hunger. When I become hungry, I am patient and when I am sated, I give thanks."

THE FOURTH BENEFIT is that when one is sated, one forgets the hungry and feels no compassion for God's people. One forgets the punishment of the Hereafter. But, when one is hungry, one recalls the people of hell. When one is thirsty, one recalls the thirst of the people of the Resurrection. Fear of the Hereafter and compassion for mankind are among the thresholds of heaven. It was for this that it was said to Joseph (A): "Thou possessest the treasure of the world. Why dost thou remain hungry?" He said: "I fear that if I eat my fill, I shall forget the hungry poor."

THE FIFTH BENEFIT is that which is at the head of all benefits and (spiritual) happinesses. It is that one keep one's own self under one's own control. Wretchedness is that one be under the control of the self. Just as a stubborn animal cannot be tamed and softened except by hunger, the human self is the same. This is not just one benefit; it is the alchemy of benefits. For, all sins arise from the carnal appetites and all carnal appetites arise from satiety.

Dhu al-Nun ® says: "I never ate my fill. I have not sinned, nor have I intended to sin." 'Ayishah (R) says: "The first innovation that appeared after the Messenger (S) was satiating oneself. Because the people eat their fill, their selves have begun to be recalcitrant."

If there were no benefit due to hunger save that the appetite of the genitalia would be weakened and the appetite for (idle) talk would depart, that would be sufficient! For everyone who eats to satiety becomes engaged in gossiping and slandering and is overpowered by the craving of the genitalia. If one controls the genitalia, one controls the eye. If one controls the eye, one controls the speculation of the soul. Hunger suffices for all of these. It is for this that it was said: "Hunger is a jewel in the treasury of God Most High. He gives it to those who love Him, but He does not give it to everyone." One of the learned has said: "God Most High removes the thought of women from the soul of every disciple who eats dry bread for a year and eats half of that (amount) to which he is accustomed."

THE SIXTH BENEFIT is sleeping less. This is the basis of all acts of worship, the conversation (with God), the remembrance (of God), and reflection, especially at night. Anyone who eats to satiety is overcome by sleep and falls like a corpse; his life is wasted. Every night a spiritual guide used to announce at the dining cloth: "O disciples! Eat ye not too much of bread, for then ye will drink too much water, and then ye will sleep too much. Then ye will experience much grief at the Resurrection." Seventy truly righteous people (R) are in agreement that over-sleeping comes from drinking too much water. Since the capital of a human being is his life and every breath a substance by which he may net the happiness of the Hereafter, and (excessive) sleep is injurious to life and wastes it, what thing could be more precious than the fending off of sleep? Whoever spends the night in worship and prayer while sated does not experience the pleasure of conversation (with God). Sleep overcomes (him) and nocturnal pollution may occur. He (may not) be able to perform the greater purification at night, and he remains in an impure state, cannot participate in worship, and is obliged to take the trouble of the greater purification. It may be that he does not have any money (for the bathhouse). It may be that his eyes fall on the privates of someone; many troubles are born from (overeating). Abu Sulayman Darani says:

"Nocturnal pollution is a punishment." That is because it is the effect of satiety.

THE SEVENTH BENEFIT is that time becomes ample for one and one may attend to work and learning. Should one eat a lot, he will spend all of his time in eating, cooking, sleeping, buying, preparing, and waiting for the means. Then he will spend time in going to the privy and moving his bowels.¹⁰⁷⁷ Every breath is a jewel and it is the capital of human being. Wasting it unnecessarily is foolishness.

Sari Saqati said: "I saw 'Ali Gurgani¹⁰⁷⁸ throwing barley meal into his mouth. I asked: 'Why dost thou not eat bread?' He said: 'Between this and my eating bread there is a difference of seventy glorifications of God and I do not waste time. For this reason, I have not eaten bread for forty years, so that I would not have to chew it and not lose this benefit.'" There is no doubt that fasting is easier for whoever is accustomed to hunger. He can stay in retreat in the mosque and always remain in a state of purification. Such benefits are not dismissed lightly by those who are engaged in the business of the Hereafter.

Abu Sulayman Darani says: "Six things occur to whoever eats his fill: he does not obtain the sweetness of worship; his memory for learning wisdom grows dull; he is deprived of the compassion for others, for he supposes that everyone else is as sated as he is; worship becomes troublesome for him; his carnal appetites are increased; and, while believers are going around the mosques, he is going around privies and dung heaps."

THE EIGHTH BENEFIT is that whoever eats sparingly is always healthy and is delivered from the torment of illness, the provision of medicine, the mincing of doctors, the pain of cupping, and the taking of bitter medicine. The learned and the physicians are in agreement that there is nothing in which there is all benefit and no harm except in eating sparingly. One of the wise has said: "The best thing which a person eats is the pomegranate and the worse is jerked meat; but eating a little jerky is better than eating too many pomegranates." In the Traditions, it is related: "Keep the fast so as to be healthy."

THE NINTH BENEFIT is that, for whoever eats sparingly, there is little expense and he does not become in need of much wealth. All

¹⁰⁷⁷ "moving his bowels": Ghazzali employs a euphemism—*tahārat kardan*—for this which means "purifying or cleaning (oneself)." A privy is called a *tahārat-jāy* (place of cleaning), so the intent is quite clear.

¹⁰⁷⁸ 'Ali Gurgani: An ascetic of the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century. In *Tadhkirat al-Awliya*, there is an anecdote about Bishr Hafi's meeting with him at a spring in which Bishr asked him for counsel.

calamities, sins, and distractions of the soul arise from the need for much wealth. If one must eat a great quantity of something delicious on a daily basis, one will be put to much trouble to obtain it every day and one may fall into the doubtful¹⁰⁷⁹ and the craving for the forbidden. A sage says: "I arrange for most of my needs by abandoning them. That is easier for me." Another says: "When I would borrow from someone, I borrow from my stomach and abandon the desire for that thing." Ibrahim Adham used to ask the price of something. They would say: "It is expensive." Then he would say: "Make it cheap by abandoning it."

THE TENTH BENEFIT is that when one has mastered one's stomach, one masters the giving of voluntary charity, giving in abundance, and being generous. For, the place of whatever enters the stomach is foul, while the place of whatever is given in charity is the pure treasury of God Most High. The Messenger (S) looked at someone who had a fat belly and said: "If thou hadst put that which thou hast put in that place in another place, it would have been better for thee." That is, in voluntary charity for the sake of God Most High.

DISCLOSING THE RULES OF CONDUCT OF THE DISCIPLE IN EATING FOOD SPARINGLY AND EATING AT THE PROPER TIME

Know that it is a religious obligation for the disciple to observe three cautions concerning food, beyond that it be (simply) lawful:

THE FIRST CAUTION is to eat little. It is not possible to go from eating a lot to eating a little in one moment. One does not have the strength to endure that and it is harmful. Rather, it should be done by degrees. For example, if one wishes to decrease one's food by one loaf of bread,¹⁰⁸⁰ one must decrease it by one bite the first day, two bites the next, three bites the day after, until in the period of a month one refrains from one loaf of bread. When it is done this way, it is easy and one is not aware of the decrease and one's nature will adjust to it.

Then the amount that one will settle upon has four degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is the most important: it is the degree of the truly righteous. It is that one be content with the necessary amount. This was the choice of Sahl Tustari (R) who has said: "Worship is with life, intellect, and strength. Do not eat food until thou fear a loss of strength. Performing the formal prayer in a sitting posture out of weakness is better than performing it standing with a full stomach. However, if thou

¹⁰⁷⁹ "doubtful": A doubt as to the lawfulness of the food.

¹⁰⁸⁰ One should not imagine the large loafs of bread common in the markets of our day. Ghazzali is talking about a loaf of bread more on the order of what is called today pita bread.

fear that some harm will befall thy life or intellect, thou must eat, for one cannot serve (God) without intellect, and thy life is itself the foundation (of all else)." He was asked: "How didst thou use to eat?" He answered: "I would spend three dirhams a year. I would get one dirham's worth of rice flour, one dirham's worth of honey, and one dirham's worth of oil. I would mix the three together and divide (the mixture) into three hundred and sixty portions. Each evening I would break my fast with one portion of that." They asked: "Now how dost thou eat?" He said: "As it happens." Amongst the monks, there are those who eat no more than a dram's weight of food. They have accustomed themselves to this gradually.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one limit oneself to half a *mudd*.¹⁰⁸¹ This is about one and one third (loaves of) bread, of that bread which is quarter of a *mann*. Indeed, that (fills) one third of a stomach, as the Messenger (S) said: "A third for food, a third for drink, and a third for remembrance (of God)." According to another narration: "A third for breath. This is what the Messenger (S) said: "A few bites are sufficient." And this is less than ten bites. 'Umar (R) used not to eat more than seven or nine bites.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one limit oneself to a *mudd*. That is about three pones.¹⁰⁸² Indeed, it is in fact more. It fills more than a third of the stomach and reaches a half.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is a whole *mann*. It is possible that anything over a *mann* is extravagance and in opposition to that verse in the Quran which says: *And be not extravagant; lo! God does not love the extravagant*, (Q. 6:141) but this changes according to the time, the body, and the work. In sum, one should stop eating when one is still hungry. Some have not established fixed amounts, but have endeavored not to eat unless they are hungry and to stop when a portion of the hunger still remains. The sign of hunger is that one be eager for bread without sauce or stew and that one can eat all bread made of barley or millet eagerly. When one looks for stew, the hunger is no longer genuine. Most of the Companions did not exceed half a *mudd*. There were some whose food was one *sa'*.¹⁰⁸³ — a *sa'* is four *mudds*—and when they were eating dates, a *sa'* and a half, because of the date stones which are discarded.

Abu Dharr (R) said: "My food was a *sa'* of barley from Friday to Friday during the time of the Messenger (S). By God, I will not exceed that until the time I come to him." He reviled some, saying: "Ye have deviated from that." The Messenger (S) had said: "The most beloved and closest to me is the person who dies holding to that which there is

¹⁰⁸¹ *mudd*: A dry measure variously given. As much as the extended hands of a full-grown man can hold.

¹⁰⁸² "pones": round cakes or loaves.

¹⁰⁸³ *sa'* (*ṣā'*): a variable cubic measure; here probably four *mudd* or five pints. (Steingass)

today." That which Abu Dharr used to say: "Ye have deviated in that ye have made sifted barley flour and have baked soft bread and also eat it with a stew. Ye have made your night garment different from your day garment—but during (the Messenger's time this was not the way. The food of the People of the Bench was one *mudd* of dates for two persons, and they discarded (the date stones from that)."

Sahl Tustari (R) says: "If all the world is flooded with blood, the food of the believers from that would be lawful."¹⁰⁸⁴ That means that one not eat except what is necessary; not that which the Libertines continually say, that when the unlawful reaches a believer it becomes lawful, for one date from the contributions of voluntary charity came to the Messenger (S), but it did not become lawful.¹⁰⁸⁵

THE SECOND CAUTION concerns the time of eating. This has three degrees:¹⁰⁸⁶

THE GREATEST (DEGREE) is that one not eat anything for three or more days. There have been persons who (did not eat) for seven days and more. Ten or twelve of the Followers¹⁰⁸⁷ achieved a degree in which they ate positively nothing for forty days. Ibrahim Adham (R) and Sufyan Thawri (R) used to eat once every three days. It is said that something of the wonders of the (heavenly) kingdom would certainly become revealed in whoever did not eat anything for forty days. A Sufi was debating a monk and asked: "Why dost thou not have faith in Muhammad (S)?" (The monk) said: "Because Jesus (A) did not eat anything for forty days, and no one other than a righteous prophet can do that. And your prophet has not done that." The Sufi said: "I am one of his nation. If I remain for forty days and eat nothing, wilt thou believe in him?" "He said: "I shall." The Sufi remained for fifty days. (The monk) said: "Wilt thou do more?" He said: "Yes," and finished sixty days without eating anything. That monk came to believe (in Islam). This is a tremendous degree that cannot be attained by perseverance, except by the person to whom some matter has appeared from beyond this world so that food preserves him and keeps him occupied while he is not aware of it.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one not eat for two or three days. It is possible to do this often.

THE THIRD DEGREE is to eat once a day, and this is the least degree. If it is twice, it reaches extravagance and one will never be

¹⁰⁸⁴ Consuming blood is prohibited in Islam. See Q. 2:173. However, as Sahl says, the unlawful may be consumed in dire necessity.

¹⁰⁸⁵ That is, he did not take it because he did not regard it as lawful for himself.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Following the AA text. HK has the word "too" (*niz*) in this sentence, but since the preceding caution had four degrees, and this one has three, the *niz* would appear to be inappropriate; except perhaps in the sense: "This, too, has degrees (and there are) three."

¹⁰⁸⁷ Followers: the generation following the Companions of the Prophet.

hungry. When the Messenger (S) would eat at early morning, he would not eat at night. When he would eat at night, he would not eat in the morning. The Messenger (S) said to 'Ayishah (R): "Be careful that thou art not extravagant." Eating twice in one day was extravagance. If one wishes to eat once, it is better that one eat in the pre-dawn so that one would be light at the evening obligatory formal prayer and the soul would be pure. If it is the case that one turns one's attention to food, one may eat once at the time of breaking the fast and once at the pre-dawn.

THE THIRD CAUTION is with respect to the kind of food, and the finest is sifted wheat while the least is unsifted barley; the median is sifted barley. The best accompanying dish is meat and sweetmeats, the least is vinegar and salt; the median is gruel with oil. The custom of those who have tread the path of the Hereafter is to refrain from the accompanying dish. In whatever craving for that they have seen in themselves, they have opposed the self. They have said that when the self satisfies its own appetite, pride, heedlessness, and darkness appear. Being in the world is preferred and death becomes an enemy. One must restrict one's self in the world so that (the world) becomes its prison and death its liberation from the prison. In the Traditions, it is related: "The worst of people are those who eat husked wheat." This is not forbidden; eating it from time to time is permitted. However, if one makes a habit of it, ease will overpower one's nature leading—it is feared—to pride and negligence. [The Messenger (S)] said: "The worst of my people are those whose bodies have been planted upon the comforts of the world. All of their aspirations are for different kinds of food and different kinds of clothing. Then, they declaim long and lavish speeches."

A revelation came to Moses (A): "O Moses, know that thy residence is the grave. Thou must restrain thy body from too many carnal appetites." No one for whom all the means of comfort have been provided and whose every whim has been facilitated has been highly regarded.

Wahb Munabbih (R) says: "In the fourth heaven two angels met together. One said: 'I am going to catch a fish in a net because such-and-such a Jew has hoped for fish.' The other angel said: 'I am going to spill a cup of oil because such-and-such a devotee has hoped for oil and it was brought to him.'"¹⁰⁸⁸ A goblet of cold water sweetened with honey was brought to 'Umar. He did not drink it and said: "I prefer that ye keep the accounting for that away from me."

Ibn 'Umar (R) was ill. He expressed a desire for grilled fish. Nafi'¹⁰⁸⁸ said: "I could not find a fish in the Madinah except with a lot of effort. I bought a fish for one and a half dirhams. I grilled it and brought

¹⁰⁸⁸ Nafi': a freed slave who once belonged to the Prophet.

it to him. A poor man came to the door of the residence and (Ibn 'Umar) said: 'Take this and give it to him.' I said: 'This is what thou didst desire and I have obtained with a great deal of effort. Let me give him its price.' He said: 'No, give the fish to him.' I gave it to (the poor man) and followed him and bought it back from him. When I returned, I brought it to (Ibn 'Umar) again and said: 'I gave him the price for it.' He said: 'Go back and give him the fish and let him keep the money thou gavest him. I have heard the Messenger (S) say: "Whoever desires something, buys it, and then abstains from it for the sake of God Most will be forgiven."'"

'Utbah al-Ghulam (R) would place dough in the sun until it was dry, then he would eat it. He would not bake it so as not to taste its goodness. He would take water from out in the sun and drink it warm, as it was. Malik Dinar (R) desired milk for forty years, but did not drink it. Someone brought fresh dates to him. He turned them over in his hands a lot, then said to his companions: "Ye eat them for I have not eaten any for forty years."

Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari¹⁰⁸⁹ (R) was the disciple of Abu Sulayman Darani (R). (Ahmad) said: "He used to wish for hot bread so as to eat it with salt. I brought it. He took one bite than put it aside and began to weep. He said: 'O Lord God, Thou hast placed my desire before me, but wilt Thou punish me? I have repented, forgive me.'" Malik bin Daygham¹⁰⁹⁰ (R) said: "I was walking through the market of Basrah. I saw very fine leeks. The appetite for them leaped inside me. I swore an oath not to eat them until that time when I reach God."

Malik Dinar (R) said: "It has been fifty years since I have divorced myself from the world in the desire for a single draught of milk. I have not drunk that and I shall not drink it until that time when I reach God." Hammad¹⁰⁹¹ (R) says: "I arrived at the door of Dawud Tayi and heard his voice. He was saying: 'Once thou didst desire a carrot and I gave it to thee. Now thou wantest dates? Thou will never get them and never eat them!' When I entered I did not see anyone with him and I realized that he had been talking to his own body."

'Utbah al-Ghulam said to 'Abd al-Wahid bin Zayd: "So-and-so describes a state of his soul which I do not possess." He said: "Because he eats just dry bread and thou eatest dates." ('Utbah) asked: "If I stop, shall I reach that degree?" ('Abd al-Wahid) answered: "Thou wilt." ('Utbah) said: "I shall stop." Then he wept and he was asked: "Art thou weeping because of the dates?" 'Abd al-Wahid said: "His self loves dates and has learned ('Utbah's) intention not to eat them again and it is weeping for that."

¹⁰⁸⁹ Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari: Ahmad bin al-Hawāri, see Note 573.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Mālik bin Daygham: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁰⁹¹ Hammād bin Sulayman: a Traditionist mentioned by Ibn Qutaybah in *Al-Ma'arif*.

Abu Bakr Jala' (R) says: "I know someone whose self desires something. It is always saying: 'I shall be patient for ten days, but give me (something) today.' The person says: 'I do not want thee not to eat for ten days. Abandon that appetite.'"

This is the path of the wayfarers and saints. If a person does not achieve that degree, well, the least he can do is to abandon some of his carnal appetites. He may sacrifice and not eat meat continually, for 'Ali (R) says: "The heart of the person who eats meat continuously for forty days becomes hard. The heart of whoever does not eat it for forty consecutive days becomes gentle." Moderation is that which 'Umar (R) said to his son: "One time meat, one time oil, one time milk, one time vinegar, and one time dry bread."

It is recommended that one not go to sleep with a full stomach, which has joined together two heedlessnesses.¹⁰⁹² It is related in the Traditions: "Employ oneself in formal prayer and the remembrance (of God) and pass up food. Do not oversleep for it blackens the soul." And it has been said: "After eating, one should perform four bows of formal prayer and recite the glorification one hundred times, or read a section of the Quran so as to obviate the harm of the food."

Sufyan Thawri (R) would stay awake all night when he had eaten his fill and would say: "Now that the beast of burden has been sated, one must make it do some hard work." One of the saints (R) said to his disciples: "Do not consume your desires and do not go after them. If ye consume them, do not seek them; if ye do, do not like them."

DISCLOSING THE INNER SECRET OF THIS STRIVING AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RULE OF THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE AND DISCIPLE CONCERNING THIS

Know that the object of hunger is the breaking of the self, bringing it under control, and correcting it. When it is upright, these measures are not necessary. It is for this reason that while the spiritual guide commands all of this for the disciple, he himself does not do it. The object is not pain and hunger. Rather, the object is that one eat that amount which neither makes his stomach heavy nor leaves the feeling of hunger. Both of these distract one from worship. The perfection in this lies in partaking of the attributes of the angels: they experience neither the pain of hunger nor the heaviness of repletion with food. However, the self does not obtain this balance except by applying force to it in the beginning.

At that time, there was a party of the great who always suspected themselves (in this regard). They chose the way of prudence and always

¹⁰⁹² "two heedlessnesses": that is, sleep and satiety.

maintained (this use of force upon their selves). Those who were more complete stopped at moderation. The proof of this is that the Messenger (S) sometimes used to fast until they would say: "He will never break it." Sometimes he would not fast until they would say: "He will never fast." When he would look for something in the house, if there were something, he would eat it, if there were not, he would say: "I am fasting." He used to like honey and he used to like meat.

They used to bring Ma'ruf Karkhi (R) delicious food and he would eat it, but Bishr Hafi would not. Ma'ruf (R) was asked about this state of affairs. He said: "My brother Bishr Hafi has been seized by piety and caution, while spiritual insight has been opened to me. I am a guest in the palace of Lord. When He gives, I eat, and when He does not, I am patient. No control remains with me, nor any opposition."

But here there is the delusion of the fools: whoever does not have the strength to oppose his self declares: "I am a mystic like Ma'ruf Karkhi." Therefore, one should not leave off striving, except two persons: either the truly righteous person who is firm in rectitude, or the fool who supposes himself to be firm in rectitude. Ma'ruf Karkhi's control was total, because if someone was treacherous to him, either by deed or by word, no anger moved inside him and he would consider it to be from God, as though the words (of slander) about him were correct. However, since Bishr Hafi, Sari Saqati, Malik Dinar (R) and persons of this class did not have faith in their selves, they did not cease from striving against them. It is absurd that anyone of the people of this era think that about their selves. *Peace!*

DISCLOSING THE HARM OF CHECKING THE APPETITES

Know that from this two harms are born: one is that a person is not able to (control) some appetites and does not want that to be known. When alone, he eats and when in public, he does not eat. This is the essence of hypocrisy. It may be that Satan will deceive him: "This is in the interest of the people so that they will follow thee." This is pure self-delusion. And, there is the person who purchases his desire and takes it home so that it may not be seen. He is able not to eat it, so he does not eat it and gives it away as voluntary charity. This is the extremity of sincerity and the act of the truly righteous. This is a tremendous hardship on the self. The requirement of liberation is that (such acts) become easy. If they are difficult, there is still some dissimulation hidden in the soul. It has the devotion of hypocrisy, not the devotion to God. Whoever flies from the craving for food and falls into the craving for dissimulation is as though he avoids the rain but sits under the waterspout. Therefore, when one discovers this demand in one's self, satisfy that craving in public by eating just a little and not a lot, so that both the hypocrisy and the appetite may be vanquished.

[SEXUAL APPETITE]¹⁰⁹³**DISCLOSING THE APPETITE OF THE GENITALIA**

Know that the appetite for sexual intercourse has been made dominant over a person to demand of him that he spread his seed so that progeny will not be cut off, and (also) as a foretaste of the pleasure of Paradise, but the detriment of this appetite is enormous. Iblis said to Moses (A): "Do not sit with any woman in private, for no man is alone with a woman without my being his companion in order to turn him towards temptation."

Sa'id Musayyab¹⁰⁹⁴ (R) says: "God Most High did not send any messenger but that Iblis was not without hope for him by cause of women. I myself fear nothing more than that. For that reason, I go nowhere except to my own house and the house of my daughter."

Know that in that appetite there are also excess, renunciation, and moderation. Excess is that one not recoil from the indecent and to devote oneself to that. When things are thus, it is a duty to break it with fasting. If it is not broken, then one should marry. Renunciation is that sexual appetite be banished entirely; this is a deficiency. Moderation is that there be carnal appetite, but it is under control. There is the person who eats various things to increase his carnal appetite: this is out of ignorance. He is like the person who disturbs a beehive so that they will sting him—except for the person who marries and his object is the keeping of the equality among women, for men are their protection.

One of the curiosities of the Traditions is that the Messenger (S) said: "I found a weakness of (sexual) appetite in myself. Gabriel (A) ordered thick wheaten porridge." The reason for this was that he had nine wives and they were forbidden to all the people of the world and their hope from all of the world had been severed.

One of the problems of this appetite is ardent love.¹⁰⁹⁵ Many sins are committed because of it. If one is not cautious at the beginning, it goes out of control. Caution lies in not looking. If by chance the eye falls upon something, it is easy to avoid looking the next time. However, if one gives (the eye) free rein, then stopping it will be difficult. The similitude of the self in this is the beast of burden that first heads for a place. Turning it away is easy. But if it slips past, seizing it by the tail and dragging it out is difficult. So, the main thing is to guard the eyes.

¹⁰⁹³ This title is bracketed in HK's text, but it is not found in AA's edition. In any event, it marks the change of subject from the appetites of the belly to those of the genitalia.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Sa'id Musayyab (Abū Muḥammad al-Makhzūmī al-Madānī): He was one of the Followers and a well-known Traditionist. He died in AH95/713-4CE).

¹⁰⁹⁵ "ardent love": See Note 603.

Sa'id (bin) Jubayr¹⁰⁹⁶ (R) says: "The temptation of David came from his eyes."¹⁰⁹⁷ And David (A) said to his son: "It is lawful to chase after lions and dragons, but do not chase after women." John, the son of Zechariah¹⁰⁹⁸ (R) was asked: "Whence does adultery first come?" He replied: "From the eye and from lust."

The Messenger (S) said: "Looking at women is a poisoned arrow from the arrows of the devil. Whoever restrains his eye out of fear of God Most High is given a faith that he perceives in his soul." And the Messenger (S) said: "After my own death, I have not left my people any distress like women." He said: "The eye commits adultery just as the genitals. The adultery of the eye is looking." Consequently, it is incumbent upon whoever cannot restrain his eye to discipline his sexual craving. The remedy for this craving is fasting. If one cannot (abstain), (the remedy is) marriage.

If one cannot withhold the eye from beautiful youths, the calamity is much greater, for one cannot make this lawful for oneself.¹⁰⁹⁹ The looking of whoever is moved by his appetite to gaze upon a beardless youth and finds solace in that is forbidden, unless the nature of that solace is like that which he finds in gazing at greenery, blossoms, and fine drawings. There is no harm in that. The sign of this is that there be no internal urge to get close to him, for blossoms and flowers even though they are beautiful do not impel one to kiss and caress them. If such an urge appears, it is the sign of carnal appetite and the first step in committing sodomy.

One of the shaykhs (R) says: "I do not fear the attack of an angry lion upon a disciple as much as I fear (the effect of) a beardless youth (upon him)." A disciple said: "I am overwhelmed by carnal appetite, so much that I cannot endure it. I have wept and supplicated much. Then, one night, I dreamt that a person said to me: 'What has happened to thee?' I explained my problem to him. He placed his hand on my chest. When I awoke, it was accomplished."¹¹⁰⁰ After a year, it (re-)appeared and I saw that person in a dream. He said: 'Dost thou want to be relieved of that?' I said that I did. He said: 'Lower thy neck.' I did that. He produced a sword and struck my neck with it. When I awoke, it had been accomplished. After a year, it appeared again. I wept and supplicated as before until I saw that person in a dream. He said to me: 'How long will thou ask God Most High to repel something the repulsion of which thou

¹⁰⁹⁶ Sa'id Jubayr: Sa'id bin Jubayr, see Note 597.

¹⁰⁹⁷ A reference to the story of David and Bathsheba.

¹⁰⁹⁸ John, the son of Zechariah (*Yahya bin Zakariya*): the same as John the Baptist (see Note 812), the son of Zechariah. (Luke 1:13)

¹⁰⁹⁹ That is, such a craving cannot be satisfied lawfully (by means of marriage), as can be done in the case of the craving for women.

¹¹⁰⁰ That is, the carnal appetite had subsided.

dost not like?' Then I awoke. I took a wife so as to free myself from that affliction."

DISCLOSING THE SPIRITUAL REWARD FOR THE PERSON WHO OPPOSES THIS APPETITE

Know that however much the appetite is stronger, the spiritual reward for opposing it is that much greater. There is no appetite stronger than this, but the desideratum of this appetite is unseemly. Most of those who do not give rein to this appetite are either unable to, or do not do so out of shame and the fear of disclosure and the ruin of their reputations. There is no spiritual reward for those who abstain for these reasons, for their obedience is motivated by the world, not by the Religious Law. And, an inability to commit sins is a blessing, for one will indeed not fall liable to punishment and sin, whatever the reason for one's abstinence. However, if a person masters this forbidden thing without any obstacle, and he abstains for the sake of God, his spiritual reward is great. He is one of the seven persons who shall be under the shade of the Throne of God Most High on the Day of Resurrection. His degree will be the degree of Joseph (A) in that meaning. Joseph (A) was the imam and leader in negotiating this dangerous passage.

Sulayman Yasar¹¹⁰¹ was extremely handsome. A woman showed herself to him and he fled from her. He said: "I saw Joseph (A) in a dream. I said: 'Art thou Joseph?' He said: 'Yes, I am Joseph who desired (her), and thou art Sulayman who did not desire (her).'" This is a reference to: *And she certainly desired him, and he would have desired her...* (Q. 12:24)¹¹⁰²

This same Sulayman says: "I was traveling to perform the Greater Pilgrimage. When I went out of Madinah, I came to a place called Abwa'.¹¹⁰³ My companion went to buy some food. An Arab woman, like a moon, came and unveiled her face, saying to me: '*Wilt thou make me happy?*' I thought that she wanted some bread. I called for the dining cloth. She said: 'I desire that which women desire from men!'" (Sulayman) said: "I hid my head under my collar and began to weep. I wept so much that the woman went away. When my companion came back, he saw the signs of weeping upon my face. 'What happened to thee?' he asked. I said: 'I began thinking about my children and I was

¹¹⁰¹ Sulaymān Yasār: one of the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century Traditionists (*muḥaddithīn*) who taught Abu Hanifah at Madinah.

¹¹⁰² *And she certainly desired him, and he would have desired her if he had not seen the manifest evidence of his Lord.* (Q. 12:24) Zulaykha, the wife of Potiphar in Islamic tradition, made for Joseph, who was saved from the sin of adultery by his faith. While Joseph suppressed his desire for the woman, Sulayman fled immediately.

¹¹⁰³ Abwā': a place on the old Pilgrim route between Makkah and Madinah.

weeping because of the sorrow (of separation) from them.' He said: 'No, a moment ago thou wert free of that. Something happened to thee. Tell me!' As he was insistent, I told him. He too began to weep. I said: 'And why art thou weeping?' He said: 'Because I fear that had it been I, I would not have been able to do (what thou didst).' When I reached Makkah and had circumambulated (the Ka'bah) and performed the Running (between the hillocks of Safa and Marwah), I was staying in my room and fell asleep. I saw a very handsome person with a cheerful countenance, pleasant-smelling, and tall. I said: 'Who art thou?' He replied: 'Joseph.' I asked: 'Joseph, the truly righteous?' He said: 'Yes.' I said: 'The story of thee with the wife of 'Aziz (Potiphar) of Egypt is a great wonder!' He said: 'That of thee and the Arab woman is greater.'"

Ibn 'Umar (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "In former times three persons went on a journey. Night fell and they went into cave to be safe. A huge stone fell from the mountain and blocked the entrance to the cave. There was no way they could move the stone. They said: 'There is nothing to be done except that we supplicate God and each one of us must show his good deeds to God. It may be that God Most High will give us an opening for the sake of that.' One of the three men said: 'O Lord God! Thou knowest that I have a mother and father and that I would not eat before they did, nor would I give (food) to wife and children. One day I was busy with some task and returned home late. They had gone to sleep. The bowl of milk that I had brought was in my hand as I waited for them to wake up. The children were crying and weeping. I said I would not give any to them before giving some to (my parents). They did not awaken until the morning and I remained holding the milk while I and my children were hungry. O Lord God! If Thou knowest that this was for nothing other than Thy pleasure, send us an opening.' As soon as he had said that, the stone moved and a small gap appeared, but it was not enough for them to be able to pass out through it.

"Another man said: 'O Lord God! Thou knowest that I have a cousin and that I was in love with her and I could not endure that, until there came a famine. She was in hardship and she came to me flirting. I gave her one hundred and twenty dirhams on the condition that she would submit to me. When I was about to do that deed, she said: 'Dost thou not fear God Most High that thou wouldst break His seal without His sanction?' I grew afraid and left the gold and did not pursue her, though there was nothing more in the world that I desired more than that. O Lord God! If Thou knowest that I did not do that except for Thy sake, grant us an opening!' Then the stone moved and the opening grew wider, but it was still not possible for them to pass outside through it.

"Then third man said: 'O Lord God! Thou knowest that once I had some day laborers. I paid them all off, except one person who had left without taking his pay. With that money, I bought a sheep on his

behalf and I traded with that in his name until it became a great wealth. One day, the man came to claim his pay. There was a large tract filled with cattle, sheep, and camels. I said: 'All of this is thy pay.' He said: 'Art thou mocking me?' I said: 'No, for all of this is the harvest of thy money.' I turned over all of that to him and took nothing back. O Lord God! If Thou knowest that this for Thy sake, give us an opening!" Then that stone moved and shifted from its place. The way was opened and all three came out."

Bakr bin 'Abdullah al-Mazani¹¹⁰⁴ says: "There was a butcher who was in love with the daughter of his neighbor. One day, the girl was being sent to a village and the butcher followed her. He seized her in the desert. The girl said: 'O young man, I am more in love with thee than thou art with me, but I always fear God Most High.' He said: 'If thou fearest (Him), why should I not fear him?' He forswore that and returned home. On the way, he was overcome by thirst and was in danger of perishing. A man, who had been sent by one of the prophets of his time as a messenger to that place, came up to him and said: 'What has befallen thee?' He answered: "Thirst." (The messenger) said: 'Come, let us offer supplications to God Most High to send a cloud so that it may stay over us and shade us as we go to the town.' (The butcher) said: 'I am disobedient (to God), supplicate thou and I shall say *Amin*.' They did thus and a cloud came and stood over their heads so that they walked in its shadow. When they separated from each other, the cloud continued with the butcher and the messenger of that prophet remained in the sun. He said: 'O young man, thou saidst that thou art disobedient, yet now the cloud was for thee thyself. Tell me about thyself.' (The butcher) said: 'I do not know of any thing except the renunciation that I did because of what that girl said.' (The messenger) said: 'That is it! There is no acceptance for any person like that which God Most High has for the repent!'"

DISCLOSING THE DETRIMENT OF LOOKING AT WOMEN AND THAT WHICH IS FORBIDDEN OF THAT

Know that it is rare that a person obtain the strength in such a matter and be able to withhold himself. Therefore, it is better that at the beginning of the deed, he restrain himself, and the beginning is the eye.

'Ala' bin Ziyad¹¹⁰⁵ says: "Gaze not at the veil of any woman, for from that carnal appetite appears in the soul." In fact, it is necessary to beware of looking at women's clothing, smelling their pleasing

¹¹⁰⁴ Bakr bin 'Abdullāh al-Muzanī: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹¹⁰⁵ 'Alā' bin Ziyād: possibly the same as the 'Ala' bin Ziyad mentioned in *Tarjamah-yi Risalah-yi Qushayriyah*.

fragrance, listening to their voices; indeed, sending and listening to messages, and placing thyself in a place where it is possible that they may see thee even though thou cannot see them. For, wherever there is beauty, all of this sows the seeds of the carnal appetite and bad thoughts in the soul.

And women, too, must beware of handsome men. Every glance of desire is forbidden and every glance of passion, even when fully clothed, is forbidden. However, if the glance falls accidentally, it is not a sin, but the second glance is forbidden.

The Messenger (S) says: "The first glance is thine and the second is upon (thy head)!" And he said: "Whoever becomes a lover, restrains himself, conceals it, and dies from that sorrow, is a martyr. Restraining oneself is that: first, that glances should be accidental; and second, that one restrain one's eyes and not look or seek, and to keep that love hidden in the heart.

Know that there is no seed of corruption like the sitting of women and men in gatherings, feasts, and outdoor parties where there is partition between them. Know that it does not suffice for the women to be wearing conspicuous¹¹⁰⁶ cloaks and face veils, for if the veil is white and there is some display in the wearing of the face-veil, the passions may be agitated, and it may appear better than if they leave their faces unveiled. Consequently, it is forbidden for women to go out wearing conspicuous cloaks or beautiful veils put on for display. Any woman who does this is a rebel (against God). If her husband and her relatives approve of this, then all share in the sin. The responsibility for any appetite or fantasy that stirs in the hearts of the men, and any corruption that arises from that, will be borne by the persons who gave (her) permission to do that.

Nor is it lawful for any man to wear a garment that has been worn by a woman for a carnal purpose, or to touch that garment passionately, or to smell it. Nor should he give sweet basil, an apple, or anything that is used to show favor to a woman, or accept that from her. Nor should he speak (to her) sweetly and softly. It is not lawful for a woman to speak to a strange man, except sternly and of necessity, as God Most High said: *If ye keep your duty, then be not soft of speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease yearn; but speak ordinary words.* (Q. 33:32) He says to the wives of the Messenger: "Speak not to strange men in a soft and pleasing voice." It is not proper (for a man) to put his lips to the place on a jug from which a woman has just drunk water.

A sage says that the wife¹¹⁰⁷ and children of Abu Ayyub Ansari¹¹⁰⁸ (R) used to pick up any cup from the Messenger (S) which his

¹¹⁰⁶ Conspicuous: literally 'white, bright, eye-catching' (*sapīd*).

¹¹⁰⁷ Or wives.

¹¹⁰⁸ Abu Ayyub Ansari: See Note 666.

fingers and mouth had touched and put their fingers in it for its blessedness. Just as there is spiritual reward in this, with respect to doing this for a purpose, there is sin. There is no avoidance more important than the avoidance of anything connected with women. *That is the end of it!*

Know that with any woman or youth one encounters in going about, Satan starts to urge: "Look at (her)¹¹⁰⁹ to see how (she) is!" One must dispute with Satan, saying: "What should I look at? If (she) is ugly, the sorrow will stay with me; if (she) is beautiful, since (she) is not lawful to me, I would become a sinner, and the regret and sorrow would remain. If I follow (her), I dismiss my life and faith and it may be that I will not gain my objective."

On a road one day, the eye of the Messenger (S) fell upon a woman. He turned back and went home and lay with his wife immediately, performed the greater ablution and came back out and said: "Whenever a woman appears like a devil, and passion is aroused, ye should go to your home and lie with your wife, for that which is with your wife is the just like that which is with the strange woman."

¹¹⁰⁹ The reader is reminded that Persian pronouns for animates have no gender. The translator has used the feminine (in parentheses) as a convention, but the situation could refer to handsome males as well as females.

CHAPTER THREE: THE APPETITE FOR WORDS AND THE HARM OF THE TONGUE

Know that the tongue is one of the wonders of the handiwork of God Most High. It is in the form of a lump of meat, but in fact, all that is in existence is under its control. Indeed, everything in nonexistence too, for it expresses both nonexistence and existence. Moreover, it is the representative of the intellect, and nothing is outside the precincts of the intellect. It expresses in words all that occurs in the intellect, the fancy, and the imagination. Other organs are not like this. The province of the eye is nothing other than colors and shapes; the province of the ear is nothing other than sound. The same is true of the other organs. The rule of each one does not extend beyond one part of the kingdom, but the rule of the tongue operates in the entire kingdom, as does the rule of the soul.

Since it is in reciprocity with the soul because it takes images from the soul and expresses them, in the same way, it also delivers images to the soul, and the soul receives some quality from whatever (the tongue) utters. If, for example, the tongue is supplicating and moaning and begins to utter the words of those, and it begins to speak the words of mourning, the soul begins to acquire the attribute of tenderness, sorrow, and pain from the tongue. The vapor of the soul's fire heads for the head and begins to come out of the eyes. And, when (the tongue) begins to speak words of mirth and the qualities of the good, a movement of glee and joy appears in the soul, and appetite moves. In the same way, from every word that it utters, a corresponding quality appears in the soul, so that when it speaks harsh words, the soul becomes dark. When it speaks the truth, the soul becomes luminous and when it speaks lies, the shape of the soul, too, becomes crooked so that it does not perceive things correctly, just as in a warped mirror. For this reason, most dreams of poets and liars do not come true, for their insides have become crooked from uttering lies and distortions. Whoever has made a habit of the truth, his dreams are true and correct.

In the same way that one does not see true dreams, the Divine Presence—the viewing of which is the apogee of all pleasures—will appear crooked in his soul when going to the other world and he will not see it true. He will be deprived of the (spiritual) happiness of that pleasure. Indeed, even as a good face appears ugly in a distorting mirror, or as one looks (at a reflection) across the breadth of a sword or down the length of a sword, the pleasure of the beauty of the form is nullified, so, too, will be the affairs of the other world and the true nature of Divine matters. Therefore, the rectitude or crookedness of the soul will be subject to the rectitude or crookedness of the tongue. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "Faith will not be straight and true so long as the

soul is not true. The soul will not be true so long as the tongue is not true."

Consequently, guarding against the evil and harm of the tongue is one the most important aspects of religion. In this chapter, we shall speak of the virtues of silence; then, we shall discuss the harmful effects of talkativeness and meddling; the delight in debate; harboring grudges; the harm of foul language, execration, and insolence; the harm of cursing, buffoonery, and ridicule; the harm of lying, backbiting, gossiping, and double-dealing; and the harm of eulogizing and satirizing and all that is connected with them, all of them; and we shall discuss their remedy, *God, may He be honored and glorified, willing.*

DISCLOSING THE SPIRITUAL REWARD OF SILENCE

Know that since the harmful effects of the tongue are many and restraining oneself from them is difficult, there is no better policy than silence—to the extent one is able. Therefore, a person should not speak, except out of necessity. It is said that the saints are those whose speaking, eating, and sleeping is in the measure of their need. God Most High has explained this, saying: *There is no good in much of their conspiring save in him who enjoins voluntary charity or kindness or peace making among the people.* (Q. 4:114) He has said: "There is no good in talking save in ordering voluntary charity and ordering goodness and making peace upon people."

The Messenger (S) said: "*He who has been silent has been saved.*" "Whoever has remained silent has been saved." And he said: "Whoever has controlled his genitals, belly, and tongue has controlled all." Mu'adh Jabal (R) asked the Messenger (S): "O Messenger of God, which is the better deed?" The Messenger (S) stuck out his tongue and placed his finger on it, meaning silence.

'Umar (R) says: "I saw Abu Bakr holding his tongue in his finger, pulling and rubbing it. I said: 'O Successor to the Messenger of God! What art thou doing?' He answered: 'This has thrown me into difficulties.'"

The Messenger (S) said: "Most of the mistakes of the children of Adam are placed in their tongues." And he (S) said: "I inform you of the easiest of the acts of worship: a silent tongue and a good character." And he said: "Say to whoever believes in God Most High and the Resurrection: 'Speak nothing but good, or remain silent.'" Jesus (A) was asked: "Teach us something so that we may enter heaven." He said: "Never talk." They said: "We cannot do that." He said: "Then, say not anything but that which is good."

Our Messenger (S) said: "When thou seest a silent and dignified believer, approach him, for he will not be without wisdom." Jesus (A) said: "Worship is ten (parts); nine are silence and one is flight from

mankind." The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever talks much, errs much. Whoever errs much, sins much. For whoever sins much, the Fire (of hell) is worthier." It was for this that Abu Bakr (R) placed a stone on his tongue so that he would not be able to speak.

Ibn Mas'ud (R) said: "There is nothing worthier of being cut off than the tongue. Yunus (bin) 'Ubayd says: "I have never seen anyone whose guarding of his ears and tongue does not appear in all of his works."

Ahnaf was silent while people were talking with Mu'awiyah. They said (to Ahnaf): "Why dost thou not speak?" He replied: "If I lie, I fear God Most High; if I speak the truth, I fear you."

Rabi' bin Khuthaym did not talk about the world for twenty years. When he would rise in the morning, he would take pen and paper and would record everything he said. At night, he would make an accounting of that with himself.

Know that all of this merit for silence is because of the harm of the tongue. Its tip is always wiggling vainly. Its chatter is pleasant and fluent, but distinguishing between the bad and the good is difficult. Silence achieves safety from its mischief. The soul and resolve are serene and may address meditation and the remembrance (of God).

And know that there are four kinds of speech: one is that which is entirely harmful; the second is that in which there is both harm and benefit; the third is that in which there is no harm and no benefit—that speech is idle chatter and its harm is restricted to wasting time; and the fourth kind is that which is pure benefit. So, three fourths of speech is not worth saying, while one fourth is. And that is what He said: *Except in him who enjoins voluntary charity or kindness*, (Q. 4:114) and the truth of this which the Messenger (S) spoke: "Whoever was silent attained safety." Thou wilt not recognize the harmful effects of the tongue until thou knowest them, and they are eleven. We shall discuss them one by one:

THE HARMS OF THE TONGUE

THE FIRST HARM is that thou utter words that are superfluous. If thou didst not utter them, there would be no loss to thee, neither in religion, nor in this world; but thou dost distance thyself from the excellence of Islam with (such talk). The Messenger (S) said: "*Among the excellences of the Islam of a man is his relinquishing of that which is not of his concern.*" Whatever the hand flees from taking is amongst the excellences of Islam. The parable of such speech is that thou stayest with some people and tell the story of thy journey—towns, foods, mountains, orchards, gardens, and all that occurred—without conveying to them the length and defects of the road to them. This is all idle chatter and one should flee from it; for if thou dost not speak of these things, there is no

loss. It is the same if thou seest a person and ask him something that does not concern thee, and this is when there is no harm in the question. But if, for example, thou shouldst ask: "Art thou fasting?" if he answers truthfully, he would be displaying his worship, which itself is not appropriate. In the same way, if thou askest: "Where art thou coming from, what art thou doing, and what wert thou doing?" it may happen that he cannot disclose this and fall into lying. This, itself, is wrong. It is meddling in that in which there may be no wrong.

It is said: "Luqman went to David (A) for a year while (David) was making chain mail."¹¹⁰ Luqman continually wanted to know what it was, but he did not ask until (David) had finished and put it on. Then he said: 'It is a very good garment for war.' Luqman understood and said: 'Silence is wisdom, but a person has no desire for that.'

The cause for such a question is that one wants to understand the conditions of a people in order to open the way of conversation with a person so that he may display friendship. The remedy for this is that one know that death lies before one and it is near. Each glorification and remembrance that one makes is a treasure that is laid up. If it is lost, it has caused injury. The theoretical treatment is that. The practical treatment is that one go into seclusion, or place a stone in the mouth.

In the Traditions, it is related: "On the day of (the battle) of Uhud, a youth was martyred. They found him with a stone tied over his belly out of hunger. His mother brushed away the dirt on his face and said: '*May Paradise be pleasant for thee. Mayst thou enjoy heaven.*' The Messenger (S) said: 'What dost thou know? It may be that he had been miserly with something which was not of his concern, or he had said something about which was no affair of his.' The meaning of this is that he will be asked for a reckoning, and *may it be pleasant* is that there be no difficulty in his account.

One day the Messenger (S) said: "At this moment one of the inhabitants of heaven is coming through the door." Then 'Abdullah bin Salam¹¹¹ (R) appeared through the door. He was informed of what the Messenger (S) had just said. They asked him: "What is thy work?" He replied: "My work is trivial, but I ignore that which does not concern me and do not wish ill for people."

Know that whatever may be said to someone in one word, if thou stretchest it out and make that one word two words, the second word is chatter, an evil for which thou art responsible.

¹¹⁰ In Islamic tradition, David is credited with the invention of chain mail. This is based upon the Quranic verse: *And We taught him the making of coats of mail for you, to protect you in your wars; will you then be grateful?* (Q. 21:80)

¹¹¹ 'Abdullāh bin Salām: a Companion of the Prophet. He was a learned rabbi of Madinah who accepted Islam. He said that he had recognized the signs of Muhammad's prophethood before his coming to Madinah.

One of the Companions (R) says: "There is the person who talks with me to whom it would be pleasanter for me to reply than cold water would be for the thirsty, but I do not reply out of fear that it would be idle chatter." Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah,¹¹¹² may God have mercy upon him, says. "The name of God Most High must be greater in your soul than that ye invoke His name in every sentence, as when ye speak to a beast of burden or a cat, saying: 'May God do this or that to thee!'" The Messenger (S) said: "That person is blessed who has abandoned the excess of speech and who gives away the excess of wealth." That is, he has taken the tie string from his purse and put it on his tongue. The Messenger (S) said: "Nothing worse has been given to a person than a long tongue."

Know that whatever thou sayest is recorded against thee: *He utters no word but there is an observer with him ready.* (Q. 50:18) If it were thus, that the angels did not record without compensation and requested wages (from the talkers) for their writing, (people) would reduce their words to one tenth, out of fear (of having to pay for them). The harm of wasting time in talking too much is greater than the harm of the cost of the writing, if thou shouldst be dunned for it.

THE SECOND HARM is speaking about the false and sin. As for the false, it is speaking about heresies and speaking about the conflicts of the Companions and their events. The sin is that one tells stories of debauchery, or a gathering in which there is debate between two persons who revile each other, or torment each other, or in which anecdotes are related in which there are insults giving rise to laughter. All of these are sins, but not like the first calamity for that is a loss of status.

The Messenger (S) said: "There is the person who says something carelessly, without knowing its weight and scope, and those words transport him to the bottom of hell. And it may be that one say something carelessly, and those words will transport him to Paradise."

THE THIRD HARM is contradiction and dispute. (Such a person) is called a dissembler. There is the person whose habit it is to refute anything another says, saying: "That is not the way of it." The implication of this is: "Thou art a stupid, lying fool and I am clever, intelligent, and truthful." With this one sentence, two destructive characteristics gain strength: one is arrogance and the other is being loathsome to another.

¹¹¹² Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah; Mutarrif bin 'Abdullāh bin Shakhīr. An anecdote about him is found in *Tarjamah-yi Risalah-yi Qushayriyah*: He requested that if anyone had some need from him, that person put it in writing as he did not wish to see the baseness of importuning. He died AH 90/708-9CE.

It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "A mansion is being built in Paradise for whoever refrains from contradiction and enmity in speech and does not utter that which is false. A mansion is being built at the summit of Paradise for whoever does not utter that which is true."¹¹¹³ This increase of the spiritual reward for thee is because tolerating the frivolous and the false is more difficult. And he (S) said: "The faith of the people will not be complete until they refrain from contradiction, even if they are in the right."

The Messenger (S) has said: "The expiation for every quarrel that thou hast with a person is two bows of formal prayer." In short, a quarrel is that a person says something and thou seizest upon his mistake and show him his flaw. All of this is forbidden, because something is obtained by means of troubling another, and it is not proper for one Muslim to trouble another unnecessarily. In such things, it is not a religious obligation to reveal the mistake. Rather, remaining silent is one of the perfections of faith. However, if the subject is religious creeds, it is called dispute. This, too, is blameworthy unless thou discloseth the aspect of truth by way of counsel in private, as (then) there is the hope of acceptance. If not, thou shouldst remain silent. The Messenger (S) said: "No people was ever lost which had not been overcome with dispute." Luqman said to his son: "Argue not with the learned for they become thine enemies."

And know that nothing requires more strength than silence in the face of the absurd and the false. This is one of the virtues of earnest striving. Dawud Ta'i had gone into seclusion. Abu Hanifah (R) asked him: "Why dost thou not come out?" He replied: "I continually restrain my self from disputing by earnest striving." (Abu Hanifah) said: "Come to the debating assemblies and say nothing." (Dawud) said: "I did that. I never endured any earnest striving more difficult than that."

There is no greater calamity than that there be sectarian fanaticism in a city and that one group, seeking rank and followers, teach that disputation is (sanctioned) by religion. Their own rapacious nature and pride urges this, since they suppose that which they have is (sanctioned) by religion to the point that greed becomes established internally which cannot, of course, be patient with this, for there are several kinds of greed and pleasure for the self in it. Malik bin Anas (R) says: "Dispute is not a part of religion." All of the forefathers forbade disputing, except with a heretic. They would speak to him citing verses

¹¹¹³ Following the HK text. AA has "for whoever utters that which is true." The difference between the two is the placement of a single dot (*bigūyad* for *nagūyad*). Comparison with the corresponding Arabic text in *The Revival* confirms HK. The interpretation would be that if one does not disclose the truth about someone's faults or sins, one would receive an even greater reward in heaven.

of the Quran and the Traditions of the Messenger, without quarrel and prolixity. If there were no benefit, then they would turn away.

THE FOURTH HARM is litigation concerning property when one goes to the judge or some other place. The injury of this is tremendous.

The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever litigates against someone without knowledge is in the displeasure of God Most High until he falls silent." It has been said: "There is nothing more distracting to the soul and more destructive of the pleasure of life and the virtue of religion than litigation over property." And it has been said that no pious person litigates over property, because litigation cannot be accomplished without excessive talk, and the pious eschew excess. Indeed, if there were nothing else, one cannot speak pleasantly with one's opponent, and the merit of pleasant speech is considerable. Therefore, it is important for anyone who has a lawsuit, if he is able, to give it up. If he cannot, he must speak only the truth and not aim at troubling (the opponent). He should not use harsh language and not seek more (than what is his right), for all of these are destroyers of religion.

THE FIFTH HARM is vituperation. The Messenger (S) has said: "Heaven is forbidden to anyone who utters foul language." And he (S) said: "There are persons in hell from whose mouths filth flows, the stench of which is a source of complaint for the dwellers in hell. They ask: 'Who is that?' They are answered: 'He is that person who, wherever there was foul and dirty language, would like that and used to utter it.'" Ibrahim bin Maysarah¹¹¹⁴ (R) says: "Whoever uses foul language will appear in the shape of a dog on the Day of Resurrection."

Know that most foul language makes ugly references to sexual intercourse, as is the habit of the iniquitous, while vilification is related to a person. The Messenger (S) said: "May that person be cursed whose mother and father are not pleased with him and who vilifies his own father." He was asked: "Who does this, O Messenger of God?" He said: "He who vilifies the mother and father of another so that his own mother and father is vilified (in return): that is as though he himself had done it (to his own parents)."

Know that just as talk about sexual intercourse should be by allusion, so should this be done with respect to every unseemly thing. It should not be spoken explicitly. The names of women should not be spoken plainly. Rather, one should say: "Those behind the curtain." A person who has an unseemly illness, such as piles, leprosy, etc., should

¹¹¹⁴ Ibrahim bin Maysarah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

be referred to as a "sick person." One must observe the rules for the use of such words, for they too are a kind of foul language.

THE SIXTH HARM is execration. Know that cursing animals, clothing, people, and all there is, is blameworthy. The Messenger (S) said: "The believer does not curse." A woman was with the Messenger (S) on a journey. She cursed her camel. The Messenger (S) said: "Strip that camel and drive it out of the caravan for it is accursed." The camel walked about for a time and no one approached it.

Abu Darda (R) says: "When a person curses the earth or something, that thing says: 'May that be cursed which is more greatly sinning against God Most High than both of us.'" One day Abu Bakr (R) was cursing something. The Messenger (S) was sitting. He said: "O Abu Bakr, a curse (and thou art) the most truthful! A curse and (thou art) the most truthful!" He said: "*Nay, by the Lord of the Ka'bah.*" (Abu Bakr) repented and freed a slave in atonement for that.

Know that curses are not appropriate against people, except for those persons who are blameworthy, as thou sayest: "May the oppressors be damned! May the corrupt, may the heretics, may the unbelievers be damned!" However, there is a danger in saying: "May the Mu'tazilites and Karramites be damned!" and from that some corruption may be born. One should avoid this, except when the word "curse" appears in the Religious Law with reference to them, or in sound Traditions. But saying "May thou be damned!" to a person or "May so-and-so be damned!"—this is not lawful for a person because one knows that by the Law, (cursing) is for a dead unbeliever such as Pharaoh or Abu Jahl. The Messenger (S) called a people unbelievers and cursed them, for he knew that they would not become Muslims.

However, there is a danger in saying "May thou be damned!" to a Jew, for it may be that he become a Muslim before his death and one of the inhabitants of heaven, and he may better (than he who is cursing him). If a person says: "We shall say to the Muslim 'May (God) have mercy upon thee!'" it may be that he is an apostate and die in unbelief. So, we should not immediately say that, nor should we curse an unbeliever who is at that time an unbeliever." This is a mistake; for the meaning of mercy is that God exalt him to becoming a Muslim because of (His) mercy. Neither is it proper that thou say: "May God Most High make him an unbeliever." Therefore, it is not proper that one specify (the person) when imprecating.

Is it lawful if a person says: "May Yazid¹¹¹⁵ be cursed!"? We say: This much is lawful, that thou say: "May the slayer of Husayn (R) be

¹¹¹⁵ Yazid: the second caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, rgd. AH60-63/680-83CE. The son of Mu'awiyah I, he is notorious in Islamic history for his part in the tragedy of Karbala in which the grandson of the Prophet, Husayn bin 'Ali, was ruthlessly slain. Apparently not

cursed if he died before repenting!" because killing is not a greater (crime) than unbelief and should he repent, it is not proper to curse him. Wahshi¹¹¹⁶ killed Hamzah¹¹¹⁷ and (later) became a Muslim, and the curse has fallen from him. However, the condition of Yazid itself is not clear as to whether he killed (Husayn). Some said that he commanded it and others that he did not, but that he was content with (the killing). It is not right that one attribute a sin to an accused person, for this is itself a crime. In these times, many great persons have been slain and no one knows with certainty at whose command. So, after more than four hundred years, how can (the truth about Yazid) be known? God Most High has made people able to dispense with this meddling and this danger. If a person does not curse the devil all his life, it will not be asked of him at the Resurrection: "Why didst thou not curse (the devil) all the time?" However, if he curses someone, he puts himself in danger of interrogation as to why he did that and why he said it.

One of the great used to say: "Should the phrase *There is no god but God* appear upon my page (of my record) or cursing someone? I prefer that the phrase *There is not god but God* appear (there)." Someone said to the Messenger (S): "Give me some counsel." He said: "Do not curse (anyone)." It is said that cursing a Muslim is equivalent to murder. Some have said that this is a Tradition from Messenger (S). So, it is better to engage in glorifying (God) than it cursing the devil, not to mention anyone else! Whoever curses another person and says to himself that it is out religious firmness—that is a deception by Satan. Most of it is from fanaticism and passion.

THE SEVENTH HARM is poetry and song. We have explained in the chapter on *Music and Ecstasy*¹¹¹⁸ that these are not forbidden. Poetry was recited in the presence of the Messenger (S), and Hassan¹¹¹⁹ was ordered to reply to the satires by the unbelievers. However, that in which there are lies, or the lampooning of Muslims, or false praise is not proper.

content with this, he ordered his army to quell a rebellion against his rule in Madinah—the city of the Prophet—which was subjected to three days of looting and rapine. The final catastrophe occurred in Makkah where another rebellion had broken out. This time the Ka'bah itself was burned. While the siege of Makkah was going on, his short, disastrous reign ended as Yazid "received the command"—that is, he died—and Makkah was spared the fate of Madinah.

¹¹¹⁶ Wahshi: the slayer of Hamzah (see following Note), the uncle of the Prophet at the battle of Uhud. He was a "wild" black man. *Wahshī* means "wild" in Arabic.

¹¹¹⁷ Hamzah: the uncle of the Prophet. He embraced Islam and was a staunch defender and champion of the Prophet's cause. He was killed at the battle of Uhud by Wahshi (see previous Note) and his body was mutilated AH3/624-5CE.

¹¹¹⁸ The Second Pillar, Chapter Eight.

¹¹¹⁹ Hassan: Hassān bin Thābit. He was a poet, first at the court of the Monophysite Christian Ghassanids in Syria. He later became attached to the Prophet. Reputedly, he lived 120 years, 60 as an idolater and 60 as a Muslim. He died AH54/674CE.

But, that which is said by way of simile or allegory, which is a poetic device, even if it is in the form of a lie, is not unlawful because its object is not that it be believed. Such poetry was recited in Arabic in the presence of the Messenger (S).

THE EIGHTH HARM is buffoonery. The Messenger (S) has forbidden jocosity totally, although a little of it from time to time is permitted. The prerequisite (for doing this) is a good character and on the condition that one does not make it a habit and a calling, and that one not speak anything but the truth. Making jokes wastes a lot of time and creates too much laughter. Too much laughter darkens the soul and detracts from a man's dignity and presence. It may be that he will be shunned.

The Messenger (S) said: "I joke, but I do not speak other than the truth." And the Messenger (S) said: "The person who speaks so that people will laugh falls from his degree as though it were from the Pleiades to the earth."

Whoever laughs a lot is blameworthy and laughing must not exceed smiling. The Messenger (S) said: "If ye knew what I know, ye would laugh little and weep much." And he said to another: "Dost thou not know that (thy) passage most certainly will be through hell? For God Most High has said: *There is not one of you but he shall approach (hell); that is the fixed ordinance of thy Lord.*" (Q. 19:71) (The other) said: "I know." (The Messenger) said: "Dost thou know that thou wilt come out of it?" He said: "No." (The Messenger) said: "Then what is laughter and where is there scope for laughter?"

'Ata Sulamī¹¹²⁰ (R) did not laugh for forty years. Wuhayb bin al-Ward says some people were laughing on the Festival (at the end) of Ramadan. He said: "If these people are forgiven and their fasting accepted, (laughing) is not the act of the thankful; if (their fasting) has not been accepted, it is not the act of the fearful." Ibn 'Abbas (R) said: "Whoever sins and keeps on laughing will go into hell and keep on weeping." Muhammad bin Wasi' said: "Would it be odd if a person wept in heaven?" They said: "It would be." He said: "Then the person who laughs in the world, not knowing whether his place is in hell or in heaven would be odder."

It is related in the Traditions that a desert Arab decided to go on his camel to the Messenger (S) to ask him a question. However much he tried to direct his camel, it would jump back and his friends would laugh. Then the camel threw him off and he died on the spot. His friends said: "O Messenger of God, the man fell off the camel and died." He said:

¹¹²⁰ 'Ata' Sulamī: See Note 846.

"Yes, and your mouths are filled with his blood." That is, they had laughed at him.

'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz (R) said: "Fear God and do not joke, for rancor appears in souls and unseemly acts are born from that. When ye sit, discuss the Quran; if ye cannot, speak well of the lives of good men." And 'Umar (R) says: "Whoever jokes with a person becomes, in (that person's) opinion, base and undignified."

From the entire life of the Messenger (S), two or three words of jest have been recorded: He said to an old woman: "Old women do not go to heaven." The old woman wept. He said: "Old woman, do not concern thy soul, for first thou wilt be made young and then transported to heaven!" A woman said to him: "My husband is asking for thee." He said: "Is thy husband the one who has cataracts (whiteness) in his eyes?" She said: "No, he does not have cataracts." He said: "Woman! There is no one who does not have whiteness in his eye." A woman said: "Place me on a camel." (The Messenger) said: "Should I place thee on a baby camel?" She said: "I do not want that, as it may throw me off." (The Messenger) said: "There is no camel that is not the baby of another camel." Abu Talhah¹¹²¹ had a child named Abu 'Umayr. (The boy) had a sparrow and it died. He cried continuously. The Messenger (S) saw him and said (to Abu 'Umayr): "*O father of 'Umayr, what did the little sparrow do to the little sparrow?*"

Most of these jokes were with women and children, to amuse them so that they not become frightened by his awesome presence. He was in the habit of making such pleasantries with his wives for their amusement.

'Ayishah (R) says: "Sawdah¹¹²² (R) came to me. I had cooked something made from milk. I said: 'Eat some.' She said: 'I shall not eat any!' I said: 'If thou dost not eat some, I shall rub it on thee.' She said: 'I shall not eat any.' I reached down and took some of it and rubbed it on her face. The Messenger (S) was sitting between us. She pulled her knee back so that she too could find an opportunity to retaliate against me and she too rubbed some of it on my face, and the Messenger (S) was smiling.

¹¹²¹ Abu Talhah: Abu Talhah bin Sahl, a Companion of the Prophet. He participated in the expedition against Khaybar. In another incident, he found his attention diverted by a bird flying about when he was performing formal prayer in his garden. In penance, he gave the garden to the Prophet do dispose of as he wished. The Prophet in turn gave it to Hassan bin Thabit (see Note 1119).

¹¹²² Sawdah: the daughter of Zama'ah bin Qays and the Prophet's second wife, she was previously married to her cousin Sakran bin 'Amr. The couple embraced Islam and went to Ethiopia. Widowed there, she returned to Arabia and married the Prophet. She died AH54/674CE.

Dahhak bin Sufyan¹¹²³ was a very ugly man. He was sitting with the Messenger (S) and said: "O Messenger of God, I have two wives more beautiful than 'Ayishah. If thou wishest, I shall divorce one of them so that thou may ask for her." He was saying this as a pleasantry so that 'Ayishah (R) could hear it. 'Ayishah said: "Are they more beautiful than thee?" He said: "I?" The Messenger (S) smiled at 'Ayishah's question, for that man was very ugly. This was before the verse commanding the veiling of women was revealed.¹¹²⁴

And the Messenger (S) said to Suhayb:¹¹²⁵ "Art thou eating dates while having a sore eye?" He replied: "I eat them with the other side." The Messenger (S) laughed.

Khawwat bin Jubayr¹¹²⁶ had an inclination toward women. One day he was standing with a group of women. The Messenger arrived and (Khawwat) was embarrassed. (The Messenger) asked: "What art thou doing?" (Khawwat) answered: "I have a stubborn camel, I want these women to spin me a rope for the camel." Then, (the Messenger) left. (Khawwat) said: "After that he saw me and asked: 'Khawwat, hast thou not given up on that stubborn camel?'" (Khawwat) added: "I was ashamed and would keep silent. After that, every time he saw me he would say that, until one day I was coming by riding an ass, with both legs on one side of the animal's flanks. He said: 'O Khawwat. What is the last news of that stubborn camel?' I said: 'By that God Who truly sent thee to mankind so that I may become a Muslim, it is not stubborn any more.' He said: '*God is greater! O God, guide Abu 'Abdullah!*'"

Nu'ayman Ansari¹¹²⁷ used to joke a lot and drink (wine) a lot, and each time he would be hauled before the Messenger (S) and beaten

¹¹²³ Dahhāk bin Sufyān: surnamed al-Kilābī, a Companion of the Prophet. He was a commander in the battle of Hunayn (AH8/630CE) in which the Muslims defeated the Hawazin.

¹¹²⁴ Q. 33:59: *O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close around them (when they go abroad). That will be better, so that they may be recognized and not annoyed. God is ever Forgiving, Merciful.*

¹¹²⁵ Suhayb: Suhayb bin Sinan, a Companion of the Prophet. He was born in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), his father a governor of the Sassanid Persian rulers of the day. Captured by Byzantines, he was finally sold as a slave in Makkah to 'Abdullah bin Jud'an. His intelligence pleased his master who manumitted him. He embraced Islam in its early days and was caught while trying to emigrate to Madinah. Much beloved by the Prophet, when caliph 'Umar was stabbed leading the formal prayer in the mosque in Madinah (AH23/644CE), 'Umar asked him to lead the prayer.

¹¹²⁶ Khawwāt bin Jubayr: nicknamed Abū 'Abdullāh, a Companion of the Prophet and brother of Ibn 'Amr bin 'Awf. He was one of the groups of men sent out by the Quraysh during the events of siege of Madinah and the battle of the Ditch in order to learn whether reports of the Madinan Jews' breaking their agreements with the Prophet and conniving with his enemies, in violation of their treaty, were true. (They were.)

¹¹²⁷ Nu'aymān Anṣārī: one of the Madinans who aided the Muslims emigrating from Makkah.

with shoes. Then, once one of the Companions said: “*God has cursed him*, how long will he drink wine?” The Messenger (S) said: “Do not curse him, for he loves God Most High and His Messenger.” It was his habit that whenever fresh fruit was brought to Madinah, (Nu‘ayman) would get some and take it to the Messenger as a present. Then, when (the seller) wanted the price, (Nu‘ayman) would take him to the Messenger (S) and would say: “He ate it. Get thy money from him.” The Messenger (S) would laugh and would pay the money. Then, the Messenger would say (to Nu‘ayman): “Why didst thou bring it?” He would answer: “I did not have any money, but I did not want anyone to eat it but thou. What can I do?”

These are all of the pleasantries related from his life. Among them, there is nothing false, nor was it possible for anyone to be troubled, nor did they detract from his dignity. In this manner, it is an occasional Practice (of the Prophet), but making a habit of it is not lawful.

THE NINTH HARM is the mockery and ridicule of a person and retailing his words and deeds in song and eulogies to cause laughter. This, when that person will be annoyed, is forbidden, for God Most High says: *Let not a people deride (another) people; it may be that (the latter) are better than (the former).* (Q. 49:11) Do not laugh at anyone or look at him with contempt for it may be that he is better than ye are.

The Messenger (S) said: “Whoever bears tales about a person concerning a sin for which that person has repented will not die without being afflicted for that.” He prohibited laughing when some one passes wind audibly. And he said: “Why should a person laugh at something when he does something like that?” And he said: “On the Day of Resurrection the gates of Paradise will be opened upon people who ridicule others and laugh at them. It will be said to them: ‘Come in.’ When they come forward, they will be barred from entering. When they go away, they will be called back and the gate reopened upon them. When they are close, it will be slammed shut. This will be repeated until they stop approaching and realize that they are being mocked.”

Know that making fun of a person who will not be upset by that is not forbidden and is of the character of play (or a jest). It is forbidden when a person will become annoyed.

THE TENTH HARM is the false promise. The Messenger (S) used to say: “There are three things that, if a person is involved with any one of the three, he is a hypocrite, even though he performs formal prayer and keeps the fast (of Ramadan): when he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he does not keep it; and when he is entrusted with something, he betrays it.” And he said: “Giving a promise is a loan.” That is, it is not proper to violate it.

God Most High praised Ishmael (A) because he kept his word. It is said that he gave his word to a person to meet him at some place, and that person did not come. (Ishmael) waited for him for twenty-two days in order to keep his word.

Someone says: "I swore allegiance to the Messenger (S) and promised to come to some place, but I forgot. I went on the third day; (the Messenger) was there. He said: 'Young man, I have been waiting here for thee for three days.'" And the Messenger (S) had given his word to someone, saying: "When thou comest, ask for something and I will arrange for it." At the time when the spoils from (the battle of) Khaybar were being divided, he came and said: "My promise, O Messenger of God." (The Messenger) said: "Decide whatever thou wantest." He wanted 80 sheep, and they were given to him. Then he said: "Thou didst decide for very little. That woman who showed Moses the bones of Joseph (A) when he was looking for them—he promised her that he would meet her request. So, Moses (A) said to her: 'What dost thou want?' She answered: 'I want my youth returned to me and to be together with thee in heaven.'" After that, the action of that man became a proverb and the Arabs would say: "So-and-so is more lenient than the master of the eighty sheep."

Know that thou shouldst not make a definite promise about something thou art unable to do. The Messenger (S), when giving his word, used to say: "*Perhaps*... It is to be hoped that I will be able to do (it)." When thou hast given thy word, as much as thou art able, thou shouldst not break it, except out of strong necessity. If thou promisest to meet someone somewhere, the scholars have said that one must remain there until the time of the formal prayer.

Know that if thou givest something to someone, asking for its return is more unseemly than breaking a promise. The Messenger (S) likened such a person to the dog that vomits and then eats it.

THE ELEVENTH HARM is lying and swearing false oaths. These are great sins. The Messenger (S) said: "Lying is one of the gates of hypocrisy." And he (S) said: "The servant (of God) utters lies one by one until he is counted by God Most High a liar." And he (S) said: "Lying decreases sustenance." And he (S) said: "Merchants are libertines." That is, merchants are immoral. He was asked: "When selling is lawful, why?" He replied: "Because they swear oaths and become sinners. They speak and they lie." And he (S) said: "Woe to the person who lies so that people will laugh! Woe unto him! Woe unto him!" And he (S) said: "I have seen thus: a man said to me: 'Arise!' I arose. I saw two men, one standing and the other sitting. The one who was standing had thrust a piece of iron with a hooked end into the mouth of the man who was sitting, pulling one corner of his mouth, stretching it until it reached his shoulder. The other side (of his mouth) was stretched in the same way,

the front was turned back, and he continued to do this. I asked: 'What is this?' He said: 'This is a liar. He will be punished in this way until the Day of Resurrection.'

'Abdullah bin Jarrad¹¹²⁸ (R) asked the Messenger (S): "Does a believer commit adultery?" He answered: "It may be that he does." ('Abdullah) asked: "Does he lie?" (The Messenger) replied: "No." He recited this verse: *Only they forge lies who believe not in God's revelations, and they are liars.* (Q. 16:105) Those persons lie who have no faith.

'Abdullah bin 'Amir¹¹²⁹ (R) says: "A child came by playing. I said: 'Come, so I can give thee something.' The Messenger (S) was in our home. He said: 'What didst thou want to give him?' I said: 'Dates.' He said: 'If thou hadst not given them to him, a lie would have been recorded against thee.' Then he said: 'Let me inform you what the greatest sins are: polytheism and disobedience of one's mother and father.' He was sitting back (against a cushion). He sat up and said: '*Except for the lying word.* Lying also.' And he (S) said: "The angels flee from the stench of the lie uttered by a servant (of God) for a mile." It is because of this that it is said when a person sneezes while speaking that he is speaking the truth. It is related in the Traditions: "A sneeze is from the angels while a yawn is from Satan." If the speech were false, an angel would not be present and there would not be a sneeze. And he (S) said: Whoever repeats a lie is a liar." And he said: "God Most High sees whoever takes someone's property by swearing a false oath and He will be angry with him." And he (S) said: "All traits are possible in a believer except treachery and lying."

Maymun bin Abi Shabib¹¹³⁰ says: "I was writing a letter. A word came that if I wrote it down would have embellished the letter, but it was a lie. Then, I decided to use it. I heard a cry: *God confirms those who believe in the Firm Word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter.* (Q. 14:27) Ibn Sammak¹¹³¹ says: "There is no reward for my not speaking lies; I do not utter them because I disdain lying."

¹¹²⁸ 'Abdullah bin Jarrad: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹¹²⁹ 'Abdullah bin 'Amir: surnamed al-Qurashi. A Companion and a member of the Quraysh tribe, as his surname (*laqab*) indicates, he took part in the conquests of Fars and eastern Iran and was appointed governor of Basrah by Caliph 'Uthman. He died at Makkah AH59/679CE.

¹¹³⁰ Maymun bin Abi Shabib: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹¹³¹ Ibn Sammak: See Note 828.

EXCURSUS: [THE EXPEDIENT LIE]¹¹³²

Know that a lie is forbidden because it affects the soul, distorting the form of the soul and darkening it. However, if one falls into the need for doing that, and one utters it for some prudent purpose, and one dislikes doing so, it is not forbidden because, since it is disliked, the soul is not affected (by it) and is not distorted. Because it is for some good purpose, the soul is not darkened. There is no doubt that if a Muslim flees an oppressor, it is not appropriate to speak the truth as to where he has gone. On the contrary, a lie here is obligatory. The Messenger (S) gave permission for lying in three situations: one is during war, for one cannot tell the enemy one's true intentions; another is when one is making peace between two persons, attributing some good words from one to the other and vice versa, even though they were never spoken; and the other is when a man has two wives and tells each one that he loves her the most.

Therefore, know that if an oppressor inquires about someone's property which that person has hidden, or if he asks about some other secret, it is lawful to deny knowledge, for the Law has declared that unseemly deeds should be hidden. If a woman will not be obedient except by promises, it is permitted to give her a promise even though one will not be able to fulfill it. That and their like are permitted. The limit of this is that lies ought not to be spoken, but since something will be born from the truth that should be avoided, one must weigh this in the scales of justice and equity. If the non-existence of that thing is more to be desired in the Law than the non-existence of a lie—such as battle among the people and aversion between a wife and husband, the loss of property, the disclosure of a secret, or the disgrace of a sin—then a lie becomes allowable. For, the evil of the act is greater than the evil of the lie. This is just the same as when carrion¹¹³³ becomes lawful when one's life is in danger. However, a lie does not become permissible for whatever is not of that nature. Therefore, every lie a person tells for the purpose of increasing rank or property, or in boasting, self-praise, and describing the degree of one's own magnificence—all of these are forbidden.

Asma'¹¹³⁴ (R) says: "A woman asked the Messenger (S): 'I tell stories about my husband's consideration that are not (true) so that his

¹¹³² Heading from the AA text.

¹¹³³ "carrion": in Islamic Law carrion flesh is unlawful, as is the flesh of swine, etc. But where there is no other food, the unlawful becomes lawful to preserve life, a need which takes precedence over the Law in such situations.

¹¹³⁴ Asmā': a daughter of Abu Bakr. She was the eighteenth person to embrace Islam. Married to Zubayr, she gave birth to the first Muslim baby after the Migration to

other wife will become angry at me. Is that permitted?' He said: 'Whoever attributes something to himself that is not (true) is like the person who puts on two garments, one over the other.' That is, both the lie itself and the throwing someone into error and ignorance so that that person will tell the story and also lie. Know that promising a child something so that he will go to school is lawful, even if be a lie. In the Traditions, it is said that that will not be recorded against one. However, that which is permissible will also be recorded, so that he will be asked: "Why didst thou say that?" Then he must show a justification for that lie's being permissible.

Know that it is forbidden for a person to tell a story or answer a question when he does not truly know, for this is done so that his own importance be not decreased.

Some have held that it is permissible to attribute Traditions to the Messenger (S) commanding good deeds and their spiritual reward. This, too, is forbidden. For, the Messenger (S) used to say: "To whoever tells a lie about me, say: 'Take thy place in hell.'" Since a lie—except for some just purpose that is an objective in the Religious Law—is not proper, and that (purpose) can be known by supposition, but not with certainty. It is preferable that one not tell a lie, so long as the certainty is not apparent and the necessity is not overwhelming.

EXCURSUS: [APPROVED AND DISAPPROVE STRATAGEMS IN LYING]¹¹³⁵

Know that when the saints fell into the need of a lie they used to resort to the stratagem of using words which were (literally) true so that a person would understand something different, which was the intention. This is called circumlocution,¹¹³⁶ as when Mutarrif (R) went to a prince, (the prince) asked: "Why dost thou come so infrequently?" (Mutarrif) replied: "Since leaving the prince (the last time), I have not raised my side from the earth except when God Most High gave me the strength." This so that (the prince) would think that he had been ill. The words were (literally) true.¹¹³⁷ When anyone sought Sha'bi at the door of his residence, he would instruct his servant girl to describe a circle with her

Madinah. (She was 27 at that time.) At the Prophet's prompting, she became noted for her generosity.

¹¹³⁵ Heading from the AA text.

¹¹³⁶ "circumlocution": evasion in speech, parables, double meanings, etc.

¹¹³⁷ Mutarrif was speaking the literal truth: he did not rise except that God gave him the strength to do so, as is always the case for all mankind. The prince's interpretation of the words, that Mutarrif was ill abed between his infrequent visits, could be extrapolated from the words and Mutarrif did not disabuse him of that interpretation.

finger and place the finger inside it and say: "He is not in here."¹¹³⁸ Or, she would say: "Look for him in the mosque."¹¹³⁹

When Mu'adh¹¹⁴⁰ (R) returned from an assignment, his wife said to him: "Thou hast done the work for 'Umar (bin) Khattab (R) for some time; what hast thou brought us?" He replied: "There was a guard with me. I was not able to bring anything." The woman thought that perhaps 'Umar had sent an inspector with him. The woman went to the house of 'Umar and reproved him and said: "Mu'adh was trusted by the Messenger (S) and by Abu Bakr (R)! Why didst thou send an inspector with him?" 'Umar summoned Mu'adh and asked what the matter was. When he told him, he laughed and gave him something to give his wife.

Know that these (stratagems) are permitted when it is necessary. However, when it is not and it throws people into error, it is not permissible, even if the words are (literally) true. 'Abdullah bin 'Utbah¹¹⁴¹ (R) says: "We went together with my father to 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz. When I came out, I had on a fine garment. People said: 'This is a robe of honor from the Commander of the Believers.' I said: 'May God Most High reward the Commander of the Believers a good reward!' My father said to me: 'Son, take care not to tell a lie or say anything resembling a lie!'" That is, that resembled a lie.¹¹⁴² However, with a trivial motive, this too is allowed, just as pleasantries and amusing someone are, as when the Messenger (S) had said: "An old woman does not enter heaven." But if there is some harm in it, it is not lawful, as when duping someone by saying that some woman likes him so that he will set his heart on that and the like. However, if there is no harm and one lies as a joke, it does not reach the level of a sin, yet it decreases the perfection of the degree of faith.

The Messenger (S) says: "The faith of person is not complete until that time when he approves for people that which he approves for himself and leaves off lying in jest. Of this kind are the things one says sometimes to please (another), such as: "I've come to thy house a hundred times looking for thee!" This does not reach the level of the forbidden as it is known that this is not an exact number and is said to

¹¹³⁸ Sha'bi was not of course literally within the circle described by the servant girl's finger, so he had not lied.

¹¹³⁹ Sha'bi may have been at home, but the visitor was sent to look for him in the mosque without Sha'bi's (servant) actually saying that he was not at home and actually in the mosque.

¹¹⁴⁰ Mu'adh: Mu'adh bin Jabal.

¹¹⁴¹ 'Abdullāh bin 'Utbah: The reference would place him at the end of the 1st Islamic (first half of 8th CE) century.

¹¹⁴² That is, the people had assumed that the Commander of the Believers (caliph) had given him a robe of honor and 'Abdullah's words implied a confirmation of that assumption, though it was not true. For this, he earned a rebuke from his father.

indicate many times, even though they are not that many. However, if one has not sought (the person) many times, it is a lie.

And, as is the custom, when someone says: "Eat something," a person replies: "I do not need anything." This is not proper when one has an appetite for it. On the night of his marriage to 'Ayishah (R) the Messenger gave a bowl of milk to the women. They said: "We do not need any." He said: "Do not join a lie and hunger together!" They said: "O Messenger of God, is something as trivial as that a lie?" He said: "It is a little lie, and little lies are (also) recorded."¹¹⁴³

Sa'id Musayyab¹¹⁴⁴ had a painful eye and something had accumulated in the corner of that eye. They said: "What will happen if thou cleanest it?" He said: "I told the doctor that I do not touch my eye. If I (clean it), I will have told a lie."

Jesus (A) says: "One of the major sins is to swear falsely by God Most High and then to say: 'God Most High knows that it is this way and not that way.'" The Messenger (S) has said: "Whoever lies about a dream will be compelled to tie a knot on a grain of barley at the Resurrection."

THE TWELFTH HARM is backbiting. This, too, may conquer the tongue and no one, except by *what God has willed*, is free from it. The evil consequences of this are great. In the Quran, God Most High likens it to him who eats the flesh of his dead brother.¹¹⁴⁵ The Messenger (S) said: "Keep far away from backbiting, for backbiting is worse than adultery. Repentance for adultery may be accepted, but it is not accepted for backbiting so long as (the victim) does not absolve (the backbiter)." And he said: "On the Night of the Ascension I passed by some people who were tearing the flesh of their faces with their own fingernails. I asked: 'Who are these people?' I was answered: 'They are those who slandered others.'"

Sulayman bin Jabir¹¹⁴⁶ (R) says: "I said to the Messenger (S): 'Teach me something that will help me.'¹¹⁴⁷ He said: 'Do not despise good works; even if it is but to pour some water from thine own bucket into the jug of another; or be cheerful with a brother Muslim, and when he leaves thee, do not backbite him.'" God Most High sent a revelation to Moses (A): "Whoever dies having repented his backbiting will be the

¹¹⁴³ Recorded by the recording angels for a final account at the Resurrection.

¹¹⁴⁴ Sa'id Musayyab: see Note 1094.

¹¹⁴⁵ *O ye who believe! Shun much suspicion; for, lo! some suspicion is a sin. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Ye abhor that! So keep your duty (to God). Lo! God is Forgiving of the repentant, Merciful.* (Q. 49:12)

¹¹⁴⁶ Sulaymān bin Jābir: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹¹⁴⁷ "will help me": literally, "will take my hand" (*dast-i marā gīrad*).

last to enter heaven. If he has not repented, he will be the first person to enter hell."

Jabir (R) says: "I was traveling with the Messenger of God and we passed two graves. He said: 'Those two are in torment, one for backbiting and the other used not to protect his clothing from urine.' Then he broke a stick into two pieces and thrust one into each grave. He said: "So long as they are not dry, their torment will be lightened.'"

When a man confessed to adultery, it was ordered that he be stoned. One person said to another: "They took aim at him as they take aim at a dog!"¹¹⁴⁸ Then, the Messenger passed by some carrion and said: "Eat of that carrion!" They said: "How can we eat carrion?" He said: "What ye are now eating of your brother is worse and more putrid than that is." This included both the speaker and the listener, for the listener was a partner in that sin.

The Companions (R) were cheerful when they met one another and did not engage in backbiting one another. They held this to be the most meritorious act of worship and counted its opposite as hypocrisy. Qatadah¹¹⁴⁹ (R) says: "The torment of the grave is of three kinds: one third is for backbiting, one third is for gossiping, and one third is for not protecting one's clothing from urine."

Jesus (A) and his disciples passed by a dead dog. They said: "What a stinking thing!" Jesus (A) said: "The whiteness of its teeth is a beautiful thing, and backbiting (the dead animal) has a greater stench." He was teaching them ye should speak of whatever is better about whatever ye see. A pig passed by Jesus. He said: "Go in peace!" They said: "O Spirit of God, dost thou always speak thus to the pig?" He replied: "I do not acquaint my tongue with anything other than the good."

'Ali bin al-Husayn (R) saw someone who was always backbiting. He said: "Be still! That is the stew of the dogs of hell."

EXCURSUS: [THE KINDS OF BACKBITING]¹¹⁵⁰

Know that backbiting is that one say (something) about someone in his absence which, should he hear it, would displease him,

¹¹⁴⁸ Thus HK. AA substitutes the word "stone" (*sang*) for "dog" (*sag*) which it closely resembles in Persian orthography. AA's reading would be something like: "They aim the stones as they did at him," which seems less appropriate considering the remarks of the Prophet which follow.

¹¹⁴⁹ Qatadah: Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Qatadah bin Diyāmah al-Sadūsī. Ghazzali quotes him elsewhere, as in *Counsel for Kings*. Born in Basrah about AH59/679CE, he was a pupil of Hasan al-Basri and an exegete. Allegedly, he was a Qadarite and he foreshadowed Mu'tazilite thinking. (Bagley) He was said to have been blind and was noted for his knowledge of genealogy. He died AH117/735CE.

¹¹⁵⁰ Heading from the AA text.

even if what has been said is true. This is backbiting. And if it be untrue, it is called a falsehood or slander. Anything thou sayest that inflicts harm on a person is backbiting, even though all of what thou sayest is relevant to his position or his animals, residence, or his affairs. However, what thou sayest about his body—he is tall, he is swarthy, he is pale, his eyes are grey, impudent, or squinty; or about his origin—as thou sayest he is the son of a slave, or the son of cupper, or the son of a weaver; or thou speakest about his nature—he is bad-natured, he arrogant, he is rude, he is cowardly, he is weak, and the like; or thou sayest about his deeds—he is a thief, he is treacherous, he does not perform the obligatory formal prayers, he does not bow and prostrate himself fully (in prayer) and recites the Quran incorrectly and he does not wear clean clothing or give the poor-rate, he eats forbidden things, he does not restrain his tongue, he overeats, he oversleeps, he does not stay in his own place; or thou sayest (something) about his clothing—the sleeves are loose and the skirt is too long and the clothing is dirty—about all of this the Messenger (S) said: “Whatever thou sayest that would displease a person should he hear it is backbiting even if it be true.”

‘Ayishah (R) says: “I told a woman that she was short. The Messenger (S) said (to me): ‘Thou hast backbitten. Spit it out.’ I spit and there was a bit of black blood in it that which had come up from my throat. He said: ‘Ask forgiveness from God one hundred times and then ask absolution from her.’”

Some have said: “If a person commits a sin, relating the story of that is not backbiting, for reproaching (sin) is also a part of religion.” This is a mistake. Indeed, it is not right to say he is a sinner or he is a winebibber or he does not perform the obligatory formal prayers, except with an excuse such as will be discussed below. The Messenger (S) has said that the law of backbiting is that when a person hears it, he should disapprove of it. Disapproval comes from all these: if there is no benefit in saying something, it should not be said.

EXCURSUS: [BACKBITING WITH THE EYE, HAND, AND GESTURE]¹¹⁵¹

Know that backbiting is not just that which is uttered by the tongue. Rather, be it by the eye, a gesture, the hand, or in writing—are all forbidden. ‘Ayishah (R) says: “I pointed to a short woman with my hand. The Messenger (S) said: ‘Thou hast backbitten her.’” The same is true for limping or squinting to mimic a person’s condition; all are backbiting. However, if one does not mention a name and says: “A person did thus,” it is not backbiting, unless those present wish to know who is being referred to. Then, it is forbidden, in whatever manner the

¹¹⁵¹ Heading from the AA text.

point is made known. Some of the ignorant ascetics and pious backbite, supposing that it is not backbiting, as when they talk about someone in his presence and say: "*Praise be to God* that God Most High has preserved us from such-and-such a thing," so that (others) will know that that person does that thing. Or, they say: "So-and-so is a man of very good circumstances, but he, too, is afflicted by people as we have also been afflicted. Who obtains escape from slips and calamities?" and the like. It may be that they censure themselves in order to achieve the censure of another.

And it may happen that they backbite him in his presence. One says: "Glory be to God! Bravo to thee!" so that that person may become more merry, or that the others in the assembly, who were not paying attention, may listen. And one says: "I was saddened to hear what had happened to so-and-so. May God Most High suffice him!" The object being that others learn of that event. Or, it may be that when talking about someone, one says: "May God Most High cause our repentance!" so that it be made known that he has committed a sin. All of this is backbiting. However, when it is like this, it is also mixed with hypocrisy, for one presents himself as a devout person and not a backbiter, thus making one sin two. In his ignorance, he supposes that he has not backbitten (anyone). And a person may backbite and someone say (to him): "Silence! Do not backbite!" without disapproving of it in his heart. This is both hypocrisy and backbiting.

One day Abu Bakr and 'Umar (R) were walking together. One said to the other: "So-and-so sleeps a lot." Then they sought stew from the Messenger (S). He said: "Ye have eaten the stew." They replied: "We do not know what we ate." He said: "Ye both have eaten the flesh of one of your brethren." He included both in this; one had spoken and the other had listened. And if one disapproves in his heart and signs with his eye, hand, or a gesture to be silent, he has still been remiss. He must say so seriously and explicitly lest the right of the absent person be neglected, for it is related in the Traditions that God Most High will, at the moment of one's greatest need, forsake whoever backbites his Muslim brother, does not help him, or forsakes him.

EXCURSUS: [BACKBITING IN THE HEART IS AS FORBIDDEN
AS THAT WITH THE TONGUE]¹¹⁵²

Know that backbiting in one's heart is just as forbidden as that with the tongue. As it is not right that thou tell someone's deficiency to another, it is also not right that thou tell thine own self that. Backbiting in the heart is that thou suspectest a person without thy having seen him do

¹¹⁵² Heading from the AA text.

anything with thine own eyes, heard it with thine own ears, or without knowing it for certainty.

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High has forbidden the blood of the Muslim, his property, and that one harbor suspicion about him." Anything which occurs to the heart which is not certain and not based upon the word of two just persons has been prompted by Satan. God Most High says: (*O ye who believe! If an evildoer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, (lest ye ignorantly harm a people then repent of what ye have done.)*) (Q. 49:6)¹¹⁵³ Do not believe the words of the sinner, and there is no sinner like Satan. It is forbidden to lend your heart to that. However, thou art not held culpable for any thought that appears involuntarily and is repugnant to thee. For, the Messenger (S) says: "The believer is not devoid of bad thoughts, but his safety lies in that in his heart he does not consider them true."

As long as there is a place or scope for the possibility, one should interpret (the thought) in a better way. The sign of its being considered true is that the heart becomes heavier and one begins to omit some of one's consideration for that person. However, when one's heart, tongue, and dealings with him are as they were before, that is the sign that one does not consider it true. But, if one hears it from a just person, he must pause and not consider him a liar, for being suspicious of this just person is also not lawful—nor of a corrupt person either. Rather, one should say: "This man's condition is hidden from me as it was for that man. It is still hidden from me now." Then, if one knows that between them there is some enmity or envy, pausing is to be preferred. If one knows that man to be more just, one should incline more towards him. Whenever a suspicion occurs in one's heart about someone, it is better that one grow closer to that person, for that angers Satan and decreases suspicion. When one knows for certain, one should not backbite. Rather, one should advise him privately. One should not lord it over him while giving counsel. Instead, one should be sorrowful during that counseling, so that one may both be sorry for a Muslim and also give counsel (to him), and obtain the reward for both (acts).

EXCURSUS: [THE TREATMENT FOR BACKBITING]¹¹⁵⁴

Know that the appetite for backbiting is a sickness of the soul, and it is necessary to treat it. Its treatment is of two types:¹¹⁵⁵

¹¹⁵³ The translator has cited the full verse for clarity. Ghazzali's text does not include the words in parentheses.

¹¹⁵⁴ From the AA text.

¹¹⁵⁵ This sentence is a bit confusing. In fact, this excursus is divided into two parts, the first part *theoretical* and the second part the *particulars of the treatment* in detail.

THE FIRST TREATMENT is theoretical and is of two kinds: One is that one meditate upon the Traditions which have come down about backbiting, and understand that the good deeds of whoever backbites will be transferred from his ledger to the ledger of the victim, leaving oneself destitute. The Messenger (S) says: "Backbiting annihilates good deeds as fire does dry wood." Perhaps one has one good deed in excess of his bad deeds and his backbiting will add to the weight of the bad deeds in the scales and for that reason go to hell.

The second is that a person should reflect upon his own shortcomings. If he sees his own defects, he will know that that (other) person is as excused for his defects as he is. If he does not know any of his own defects, he should know that ignorance of his own defects is a defect greater than all other defects. Then, if he is speaking the truth,¹¹⁵⁶ there is no defect greater than eating carrion flesh, so why does he create a shortcoming for his flawless self?¹¹⁵⁷ He should busy himself with gratitude (to God) and know that if he attributes some shortcoming to a person in an act, no servant (of God) is devoid of shortcomings. Since he himself cannot be true to the limits of the Law—even if all of his lapses be minor—and cannot correct himself, why should he be surprised by others? If there is some defect in someone's creation,¹¹⁵⁸ he should know that the defect was put there by the Maker and (the person) is not responsible for it and should not be criticized for it.

AS FOR THE PARTICULARS OF THE TREATMENT, they are that one look to see what it is that keeps him backbiting. That is no more than eight things:

The first (cause) is that he is angry with that person for some reason. He must comprehend that his being carried off to hell because of his anger at someone is foolishness, for he has contended with himself! The Messenger (S) says: "On the Day of Resurrection God Most High says to whoever swallows his anger: 'Choose as many as thou canst from the fair-eyed ones of heaven.'"

The second cause is that he seeks the approval of others in order to obtain their satisfaction. The treatment of this is to know that obtaining the wrath of God Most High for the satisfaction of people is foolishness and ignorance. Rather, he should seek the satisfaction of God Most High by being angry at them and disapproving of them.

The third cause is that he has been caught in some crime and imputes it to another in order to save himself. He ought to know that the calamity of God Most High's ire, which is certain, is much greater than that which he avoids.¹¹⁵⁹ Saving himself is a supposition, while the anger

¹¹⁵⁶ About his own lack of defects.

¹¹⁵⁷ Backbiting has already been likened several times to eating the flesh of the dead.

¹¹⁵⁸ That is, a congenital or accidental physical defect beyond one's control.

¹¹⁵⁹ That is, the displeasure of people.

of God Most High will be the certain result in time. He must defend himself and not impute another. Someone may say: "Even if I consume the forbidden or accept the coin of the ruler, so-and-so does the same thing!" This is stupidity; it is not right to follow someone into sin. What excuse is there in saying that? If thou seest a person walking into a fire, thou wilt not follow him. Agreement in sin is the same as that. Therefore, by reason of thine uttering a false excuse, why shouldst thou commit the sin of another and (also) backbite?

The fourth cause is that when a person desires to praise himself, but he cannot. He backbites others so as to display his own virtue and purity. As when one says: "So-and-so does not understand anything. So-and-so does not keep away from women." That is, *I* do! One should know that from such (words) that whoever has the faculty of reason believes in his corruption and ignorance, and not in his virtue and piety. And what is the benefit of the credence of someone who is brainless? Indeed, he makes himself a loser to God Most High in order to gain something from a wretch in whose hands there is nothing!

The fifth cause is the envy of someone's rank, knowledge, or wealth, and of the good faith people have in him. He cannot endure that. He starts to search out defects until he will have quarreled with him. He does not realize that he is quarreling with himself, for he will be in the torment of envy in this world and will be in the torment for backbiting in the next world too, thus depriving himself of the blessings of both stopping places. He does not know even this much: that for whomever rank and retinue have been apportioned (by destiny), the envy of the envious increases that rank.

The sixth cause is ridicule, to defame someone by laughter and sport. He does not realize that he is defaming himself before God Most High first, then before people. If thou reflect that he will place his sins upon thy shoulders¹¹⁶⁰ on the Day of Resurrection, and drive thee as though thou were an ass to hell, thou knowest that thou art better than that thou be an object of ridicule, and thou knowest that the person whose condition will be this (in the Hereafter), if he be rational, would not engage in laughter and sport.

The seventh cause is that (the object of backbiting) is guilty of some sin and (the backbiter) becomes saddened (about that) for the sake of God Most High, as is the custom of the religious, and that he is truthful in that sadness. However, in talking about it, he mentions the name (of the sinner), remaining unaware that that is backbiting and not knowing that Iblis envied him because he knew that there would be a spiritual reward for that sorrow. (Iblis) drove the name of that person

¹¹⁶⁰ "shoulders": literally, "neck."

onto (the backbiter's) tongue so that the backbiting would cause that reward to be lost.

The eighth cause is that he be angered at someone for the sake of God Most High for some sin that that person has committed, or he is astonished at him, and during that astonishment or anger he utters his name so that the people learn of it. That causes the loss of the spiritual reward for his (righteous) anger. Instead, he should not mention the name of the person when talking about his anger or astonishment.

DISCLOSING THE ALLOWED EXCUSES IN BACKBITING

Know that backbiting is forbidden as lying. It does not become permitted except when compelled by necessity. There are six excuses:

THE FIRST EXCUSE is when complaining of injustice before a ruler or a judge. This is lawful, as it is when one is seeking someone's help. However, it is not right for the oppressed person to tell someone from whom there can be no help about the injustice of the oppressor. Someone was talking about the tyranny of Hajjaj¹¹⁶¹ in the presence of (Ibn) Sirin (R). (Sirin) said: "God Most High will take vengeance on the person who backbites Hajjaj, just as he will take vengeance on Hajjaj for the people (he has oppressed)."

THE SECOND EXCUSE is that if one sees some corruption some place, he informs someone able to enforce morality and stop it. 'Umar passed by Talhah or 'Uthman. He greeted him, but it was not answered. He complained to Abu Bakr (R) telling him about that, and this was not held to be backbiting.

THE THIRD EXCUSE is to request a religious decree, as when one says: "My wife or father or some person does this to me." It is better that he say: "What dost thou say if a some person does this?" However, it is permitted for the name to be mentioned, for it may be that some solution will occur to the expounder of the Law should he know the circumstances exactly. Hind¹¹⁶² said to the Messenger (S): "Abu Sufyan is a miserly man. He does not provide enough for me and my children. If I take something without his knowledge, would it be lawful?" He replied: "Take just as much as is sufficient for thy sustenance." Relating the oppression of the children and miserliness is backbiting, but the Messenger (S) deemed it lawful with his judgment.

¹¹⁶¹ Hajjaj: al-Hajjāj bin Yūsuf. A teacher in Ta'if, he was appointed governor of Arabia in AH73-4/692CE and of Iraq in AH75-6/694CE. He was famous for his ability and notorious for his severity. He died AH95/714CE.

¹¹⁶² Hind, the daughter of 'Utbah. She died in AH 14/635-6CE.

THE FOURTH EXCUSE is to warn others of someone's evil, as when a person is a heretic or a thief and people will put their confidence in him, or he will seek a woman in marriage, or he wishes to purchase a slave. (The informant) knows that if he does not disclose that person's defect, someone may be harmed. It is better that he tell about that defect, for keeping it hidden would be a defect in being compassionate for Muslims. This is the authority for the certifier of purity¹¹⁶³ to accuse during testimony. The same (is true) of the person who is consulted. The Messenger (S) has said: "Tell whatever there is about a corrupt person so that the people may be wary of him." This is the practice when there is the fear of a harm.¹¹⁶⁴ However, without this excuse, such speaking is not lawful. It is said that there is no backbiting with respect to three persons: the tyrannical ruler, the heretic, and the person is openly corrupt. This is because those people do not conceal (what they do) and do not become distressed by anyone's talking about it.

THE FIFTH EXCUSE is that a person be well known by some epithet (relating to a physical defect), such as A'mash (Bleary-eyed), A'raj (Lame), etc., for he has become well known by that and does not take offense. It is preferred that he be addressed by another name, to call a blind man: "O Seeing One!" or "O One with the Closed Eyes!" and the like.

THE SIXTH EXCUSE is that the debauchery be open, such as the effeminate, the haunter of taverns, and those persons who are not ashamed of their dissoluteness. Mentioning them is lawful.

THE ATONEMENT FOR BACKBITING

Know that the atonement for backbiting is that one repent and be regretful in order to come out from under the requital due God Most High and to seek that person's pardon in order to come out from under the requital that person is due. The Messenger (S) says: "One should seek a pardon from whoever is due a requital for damage to reputation or property before the day comes on which there is neither dirham nor dinar. There will be nothing but one's good deeds to give in return to the claimant. If there are none, then that person's bad deeds will be placed upon him." 'Ayishah (R) told a woman that she was rude. The Messenger (S) said: "Thou hast slandered her. Seek her pardon."

In the Traditions, it is related that anyone who backbites a person must seek forgiveness from God Most High. Some suppose from this

¹¹⁶³ "certifier of purity" (*muzakkī*): an official whose responsibility was to testify to the correctness and justice of testimony before a judge.

¹¹⁶⁴ A calamity such as a plague or blight.

Tradition that this is sufficient and (that person's) absolution need not be sought. But, on the authority of other Traditions, this is an error. However, this asking of forgiveness is for (the situation) in which the (injured) person is no longer living. (If he is alive), one must ask his forgiveness. Absolution is that one go to him humbly and with regret, and say: "I have erred and I have lied. Forgive me." If (that person) does not, one must praise him and attend him until his heart is gladdened and he grants absolution. If he does not, it is his right, but one's attendance upon (the backbitten) will be written down among one's good deeds. It may be that, instead, (the absolution) will be given at the Resurrection. However, forgiving is better.

There were some of the forefathers who would not grant absolution. They would say: "There is no good deed in our register greater than this."¹¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless the correct view is that forgiving is a good deed excelling that. Some one backbit Hasan Basri (R). (Hasan) sent him a tray of fresh dates and said: "I heard that thou hast sent (the merit of) thine own worship to me as a gift, and I too wished to return the favor. Hold me excused that I was not able to return the favor completely." Know that absolution is correct when one says: "What I have said,"¹¹⁶⁶ for being absolved for the unknown is not correct.

THE THIRTEENTH HARM is talebearing and calumny. God Most High says: *Defamer, going about with slander.* (Q. 68:11) And He says: *Woe to every slanderer, defamer!* (Q. 104:1) And He says: *The bearer of slander.* Q. 111:4) In all of these, He intends calumny.

The Messenger (S) said: "The calumniator will not enter Paradise." And he said: "I tell you who the worst of you are: the persons who bear tales among people, disturb them, and incite them one against another." And he said: "When God Most High created Paradise, He said (to it): 'Speak!' It said: 'Happy is the person who reaches me.' God Most High said: 'By My Might and Glory, eight persons shall not enter thee: the winebibber, the adulterer who persists in that, the calumniator, the complaisant cuckold, the agent of (unjust) authority, the effeminate, the person who cuts himself off from his kin, and the one who says: "I have sworn by God to do something" and does not do it.'"

In the Traditions, it is related: "The children of Israel were afflicted with a drought. They offered prayers for rain repeatedly, but rain did not come. Then it was revealed to Moses (A): 'I do not respond to your supplications because there is amongst you a calumniator.' (Moses) asked: 'Lord God, who is he that I may expel him from among

¹¹⁶⁵ By not granting absolution (in this thinking), they would retain the spiritual reward of having been wronged by the backbiting and lies.

¹¹⁶⁶ That is, one should specify the offense. AA has "what I have done" instead of "what I have said."

us?’ ((God) said: ‘I have enmity with the calumniator. Should I Myself utter calumnies?’ Moses (A) told all to repent, then God Most High sent rain.”

It is said that someone sought a wise man and traveled seven hundred parasangs¹¹⁶⁷ to ask him: “What is more spacious than the sky? What is heavier than the earth? What is harder than stone? What is hotter than fire? What is colder than the intense cold of winter?”¹¹⁶⁸ What is more powerful than the sea? And what is more wretched than the orphan?” The sage said: “Calumny is heavier than the earth. God is more spacious than the sky. The soul of the contented is more powerful than the sea. Envy is hotter than fire. The need for unfaithful kin is colder than winter. The soul of the unbeliever is harder than stone. And the calumniator, whose words are not heard, is more wretched than the orphan.”

EXCURSUS: [WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH A CALUMNIATOR?]¹¹⁶⁹

Know that calumny does not include all talk with one another. Rather, the talebearer is one who discloses some matter that will cause sorrow to another, whether by word, deed, or any other (method), whether one reveals it by word, gesture, or writing. Indeed, lifting the veil from something that will cause sorrow to a person is not right except when he secretly betrays the property of a person. It is lawful to disclose this. The same is true for everything that will cause harm or loss to Muslims. Anyone told that so-and-so said this about thee, or is devising this with respect to thee, or the like, should do six things:

The first is that one should not believe it, for the talebearer is a lewd person. God Most High says: “Listen not to the word of the lewd.”

The second is that one counsel him and forbid this sin, for forbidding the bad is a duty.

The third is that one should consider him an enemy for the sake of God Most High. Enmity with the calumniator is a duty

The fourth is that one not be suspicious of (the subject of the calumny), for (such) suspicion is forbidden.

The fifth is that one should not investigate to learn the truth of the matter, for God Most High has prohibited that.

The sixth is that one not approve for someone else that which one would not approve of for oneself. One should not repeat the calumniator’s tale to others and should keep it hidden. All six of these are duties.

¹¹⁶⁷ Seven hundred parasangs: about 2,100 miles.

¹¹⁶⁸ “the intense cold of early winter” (*zamharīr*): the forty days following the winter solstice; also, the moon, which was a metaphor for coldness.

¹¹⁶⁹ Heading from the AA text.

Someone was calumniating in the presence of 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz (R). He said: "I shall look to see whether thou hast told a lie and art of the people referred to in the verse '*if an unrighteous man brings you news...*' (Q. 49:6), or if thou speakest the truth and art of the people referred to in the verse '*defamer, going about with slander...*' (Q. 68:11) But if thou wishest, repent so that I may forgive thee." He said: "I repent, O Commander of the Believer! Forgive me!"

Someone said to a sage: "So-and-so has said such-and-such about thee." (The sage) said: "Thou hast come to visit and thou hast committed three betrayals: Thou hast made a brother unpleasant in my soul; thou hast distracted my soul from tranquillity; and thou hast made thyself a lewd and accused person before me."

Someone said to Sulayman bin 'Abd al-Malik: "Hast thou said anything about me?" He answered: "No, I have not." (The other) said: "A trustworthy, just person has related that." Zuhri¹¹⁷⁰ was sitting (there). He said: "O Commander of the Believers! A calumniator is not just." He said: "Thou hast spoken the truth."

Hasan Basri (R) said: "Whoever brings a tale about someone to thee, carries tales about thee to others. Beware of him! In truth, one ought to hold him an enemy. His action is talebearing. It is perfidy and treachery. It is spite and envy. It is hypocrisy, meddling, and deceit. All of these are treachery. It is said that truth is good from every person save the talebearer and the slanderer. Mus'ab bin al-Zubayr¹¹⁷¹ (R) says: "For us, the acceptance of slander is worse than the slander, for calumny is the indication and acceptance is the permission."

The Messenger (S) said: "Slander is not a legitimate child."

Know that the evil of the calumniator and the meddler is enormous and it may be the cause of bloodshed. Someone was selling a slave, saying: "He has no defect except that he calumniates and meddles." That person said: "No problem," and he bought him. After a few days, that slave said to his master's wife: "The master does not love thee and wants to buy a concubine. Now, when the master is sleeping, take a razor and cut off some hairs from under his throat so that I can perform some magic for thee to make him thy lover." And he said to his master: "Thy wife is in love with another and wants to kill thee. Pretend to be asleep and thou wilt see!" The master pretended to be asleep. His wife came with a razor in her hand. She sat by the master's pillow and pulled his beard back to cut some hairs. No doubt was left to the master but that she was about to murder him. He jumped up and killed his wife. When they heard, the wife's tribe came to the master and killed the

¹¹⁷⁰ Zuhri: A reference to Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Muslim (AH 57-124/c.676-742CE).

¹¹⁷¹ Mus'ab bin al-Zubayr: An important provincial governor of the early Islamic period. (Fihrist)

master in retribution for the woman. There were many relatives from both tribes and then they fell upon each other. Many were slain from both sides in the battle because of the evil of (the slave's) calumnies.

THE FOURTEENTH HARM is being two-faced between two enemies, speaking with each one in order to please him. It may be that he relate what one says to the other and vice versa and pretend friendship to both. This is worse than calumny. The Messenger (S) said: "For whoever is double-tongued in this world, there will be two fiery tongues in the next." And he said: "The worst of the servants of God Most High is two-faced."

Therefore, know that whoever mixes with two enemies must be silent about all that he hears or speak the truth in the presence of that person or in his absence in order not to be a hypocrite. He should not tell either one what the other says, nor should he show himself to be a supporter of each of them.

Ibn 'Umar (R) was told: "We approach princes and speak to them in a way that we do not speak when we come away." He said: "We counted this as hypocrisy during the time of the Messenger. Whoever has no pressing need to visit rulers and says things that he would not say later is a hypocrite and two-faced. There is a leniency in this regard if there be a pressing need."

THE FIFTEENTH HARM is praising, eulogizing, and extolling people (in the hope of reward). There six harms in this: four for the speaker and two for the listener who is praised.

As for the harms for the *PRAISER*:

One is that he overpraises and lies, thus becoming a liar. It is written that: "Whoever exaggerates in the praise of people will have a long tongue at the Resurrection so that it drags on the ground and he is continually stepping on it and stumbling on it."

The second is that there may be hypocrisy in it and that, by praising, he feigns a love which he does not have.

The third is that he may say something (about the subject of his eulogy) which he does not truly know, (using words) such as: pious, abstemious, learned, and the like. Someone praised a man in the presence of the Messenger. The Messenger (S) said: "Woe unto thee! Thou hast beheaded him!" Then, he said: "If thou must eulogize someone, say: 'I think that it is thus, but I do not vouch for a person by God Most High.' Then his accounting is with God Most High, if he thinks and speaks the truth."

The fourth is that the praised person is an oppressor and he becomes pleased by the words (of the eulogizer). It is not proper to

gladden an oppressor. The Messenger (S) said: "When a lewd person is extolled, God Most High becomes angry at that (extoller)."

And for the *PRAISED*, there are two kinds of harm:

One is that he will become proud and conceited. 'Umar (R) was sitting one day with his whip (in hand). A man (called) Jarud¹¹⁷² approached. Someone said: "He is the chief of the (tribe of) Rabi'ah." When he had sat down, 'Umar struck him with a blow of the whip. (Jarud) said: "O Commander of the Believers, what is this for?" ('Umar) said: "Didst thou not hear what that man said?" (Jarud) answered: "I heard him. Now what has happened?" ('Umar) said: "I was afraid that something would happen in thy soul. I wanted to break thy pride."

The other is that when he hears himself praised for righteousness and wisdom, he will become lazy in the future and say: "I have achieved perfection." It was concerning this at the time someone was being praised in his presence, the Messenger (S) said: "Thou hast beheaded him. If he hears it, he will not prosper any more." The Messenger (S) said: "If a person approaches a person with a sharp knife, it is better than if he praised him face to face." Ziyad bin Aslam¹¹⁷³ (R) says: "Satan will approach whoever hears himself praised and snatch him away. If he is a believer who knows himself, he will be humble."

However, if there is no chance for these six banes, then eulogizing is good. The Messenger (S) has praised the Companions. He said: "O 'Umar, if I had not been sent to the people, thou wouldst have been sent." And he said: "If the faith of all the world were placed against the faith of Abu Bakr, his faith would be greater;" and the likes of these. He knew that they would not be harmed by it.

Nevertheless, self-praise is blameworthy, for God Most High has prohibited it: *So ascribe not purity to yourselves.* (Q. 53:32) It is lawful if a person is the leader of a people and he describes his own circumstances so that they obtain the grace of his leadership, as the Messenger (S) said: "*I am the lord of the children of Adam without bragging.*" That is: "I do not boast of this lordship. I boast that this was given to me." He said this so that all would follow him. Joseph (A) said (to Pharaoh): "*Place me over the treasures of the land; surely I am a good keeper, knowing well.*" (Q. 12:55)

¹¹⁷² Jārūd: a reference to Bishr bin al-Mundhir bin al-Jarud (d. AH 83/702-3CE). He was known as Ibn al-Jarud (the son of Jarud), but in fact was Jarud's grandson. (HK)

¹¹⁷³ Ziyād bin Aslam: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

EXCURSUS: [WHAT THINGS ARE INCUMBENT
UPON THE PRAISED ONE]¹¹⁷⁴

Consequently, when a person is eulogized, he must be wary of arrogance and conceit and meditate upon the danger of the End, for no one knows that. A dog or a pig is better than anyone who is not saved from hell. No one knows that he will be saved.

He must reflect that if the eulogizer knew all of (the eulogized one's) secrets, he would not sing his praises. (The praised one) should busy himself with giving thanks that God Most High has hidden his inner self from (the eulogizer). He should display disapproval when he is praised and should feel that disapproval in his heart too.

One of the saints was being praised. He said: "O Lord God! They do not know me. Thou ever knowest me." Another was being praised. He said: "O Lord God! This man is striving to draw near to me with that thing which Thou holdest in enmity. Thou art my witness that I am striving to draw near to Thee with enmity to him." 'Ali bin Abi Talib (R) was being eulogized. He said: "O Lord, do not ascribe to me what they are saying. Forgive that which they do not know about me. And make me better than that which they think." Someone disliked 'Ali (R) and praised him hypocritically. 'Ali (R) said: "I am less than that which thou art saying and more than that which thou hast in thy heart."

¹¹⁷⁴ Heading from the AA text.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCERNING ANGER, HATRED, ENVY; (THEIR) DETRIMENTS, [AND THEIR TREATMENT]

1. [CONCERNING ANGER]

Know that when anger is dominant, it is a reprehensible trait. Its origin is the fire of the injury of which is on the soul. It is ascribed to Satan, who spoke thus: "*Thou hast created me of fire and him Thou didst create of mud.*" (Q. 38:76) The effect of fire is motion and restlessness, while the effect of clay is calm and tranquillity. The relationship to Satan of whoever is dominated by anger is more apparent than his relationship to Adam. It is for this that Ibn 'Umar (R) asked the Messenger (S): "What is that thing which will keep me away from the anger of God Most High?" He said: "That thou not grow angry." And he said to the Messenger (S): "Tell me some act that is simple and hope-giving."¹¹⁷⁵ (The Messenger) said: "*Do not anger!*" As often as (Ibn 'Umar) repeated the question, (the Messenger) gave the same answer. And the Messenger (S) said: "Anger is as destructive to faith as aloes is to grapes." Jesus (A) said to a monk: "Do not become angry." (The monk) replied: "I am not capable of that, as I am human." (Jesus) said: "Do not accumulate wealth." (The monk) said: "I am capable of that."

Know that since it is not possible to become completely devoid of the element of anger, suppressing it is a great feat. *God Most High said: ...And those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward mankind...* (Q. 3:134) He praised those persons who suppress their anger. And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High controls His punishment for whoever controls his anger. Whenever he begs forgiveness from God Most High, He accepts it. And God Most High covers the shame of whoever restrains his tongue." And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High fills the soul of anyone who has the ability to control his anger with contentment when aroused." And he said: "There is a gate to hell which no one enters save the person who gives rein to his anger contrary to the Law." And he said: "Nothing swallowed by His servant is more pleasing to God Most High than anger. None will swallow that save the one whose heart has been filled with faith by God Most High."

Fudayl (bin) Iyad, Sufyan Thawri, and a company of the saints (R) are in agreement that there are no acts better than mildness at the moment of anger and forbearance at the time of craving.

¹¹⁷⁵ "hope-giving": that is, something that will give him hope on the Day of Resurrection.

Someone was speaking harshly to 'Umar bin 'Abd al-Aziz. ('Umar) looked down and said: "Didst thou wish to enrage me so that Satan may cause me to rise out of pride and sovereignty and give rein to my anger against thee this day so that thou may give rein to thy retaliation tomorrow? That shall never happen!" And he remained silent.

A prophet (A) said: "Who will accept this from me and undertake not to become wrathful and become my successor after my death and be my equal in Paradise?" Someone said: "I shall give the undertaking and accept it." (The prophet) repeated what he had said and the man also said that he accepted the terms. He was faithful to his word and became his successor. His was called "Holder of the Pledge"¹¹⁷⁶ because he had given that pledge; that is, he had accepted it.

EXCURSUS: [THE ROOT OF ANGER WILL NEVER
BE UPROOTED FROM THE INNER BEING]¹¹⁷⁷

Know that anger has been created in a person so as to be his weapon in order to stop anything harmful to him, just as appetite was created to be his tool to draw what is beneficial to himself. There is no escape from both of these. However, when they are in excess, they become harmful, resembling a fire which burns in the heart, its smoke rising to the brain, darkening the dwelling of reason and thought so that one does not see the way of right action, just as when smoke enters a cave it makes things so dark that nothing can be seen. This is very reprehensible. Concerning this, it has been said that anger is the ogre of reason.

It may happen that this anger is weak. That, too, is reprehensible, for the zeal against the forbidden and the enthusiasm for religion against unbelievers arises from (the impulse) of anger. God Most High said to the Messenger (S): *Strive against the unbelievers and the hypocrites! Be harsh with them!* (Q. 9:73) (God) praised the Companions and said: *(And those with him) are hard against the unbelievers.* (Q. 48:29) All of these are outcome of anger. Therefore, the faculty of anger must not be excessive, nor must it be weak. Rather, it should be balanced and under the direction of reason and religion.

Some have thought that the objective of asceticism is the rooting out of anger. That is an error, for anger is a weapon and there is no escaping it. The elimination of the impulse of anger is impossible as long as a person is alive, just as the elimination of the impulse of appetite is impossible. However, it is lawful to conceal it in certain acts and at

¹¹⁷⁶ "Holder of the Pledge" *Dhāl-Kifl*: mentioned in the Quran (Q. 21:87 and 38:48). Commentators have identified him variously with Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Obadiah amongst the Old Testament prophets.

¹¹⁷⁷ From the AA text.

certain times so that someone may suppose that there is absolutely no anger. The explanation of this is that the anger arises from someone's attempt to take away something that one needs. However, if there is no need for it, as, for example, a dog that is superfluous, should someone beat or kill it, it is right not to become angered.

But, as for food, residence, clothing, health, and the like, the need for them never ends. Consequently, (if) a person injures these, resulting in a loss of one's well-being, or takes one's food or clothing, anger will necessarily appear. So, the anger of him whose need is greater will be greater and he will be more helpless and impoverished; for freedom lies in needlessness. However much one's need is greater, the nearer one is to slavery. It is possible that a person, through self-discipline, make himself so that his needs are reduced to the absolutely necessary. This results in the elimination from himself of the need for rank, property, and the excesses of the world. Anger will necessarily follow those needs and depart. For that reason, the person who is not seeking rank is not angered by anyone who has advanced ahead of him or who sits above him in assemblies.

There are great differences among people in this respect, for most anger is connected with the increase of wealth and rank, so that it may happen that a person will boast of something worthless such as chess, backgammon, pigeon-flying, and the excessive drinking of wine. If someone says that he does not play chess well, or he does not drink a lot of wine, he will become angry. There is no doubt that whoever is of this kind can be saved by abstention (from those things). However, that which is certain for man is that the impulse of anger does not become eliminated and that itself should not happen, nor is it praiseworthy. However, it must not be thus that it deprives a person of his self-control and overpowers his reason and the Law. By self-discipline, one may return anger to this degree. The proof that the impulse of anger does not vanish, nor should it do so, is that the Messenger (S) was not lacking in anger. He said: "I am a human being. *I anger as people anger*. I become angry just as a human being becomes angry. Whomever I would curse, or speak harshly to in anger, or strike, O Lord God, turn that into a cause of my mercy upon him."

'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As¹¹⁷⁴ (R) said: "O Messenger of God: "Should I write down all that thou sayest?" He said: "Write it

¹¹⁷⁴ 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr bin al-'Ās: a Companion of the Prophet who embraced Islam before his father. (His father would become the famous conqueror and governor of Egypt who died AH43/664CE.) 'Abdullah was famous for his piety and his asceticism, to the extent that the Prophet himself asked him to moderate his devotions. He fought against 'Ali in the civil war between the Umayyads and the supporters of 'Ali, but when 'Ammar was killed, he regretted his participation. Later, he befriended Husayn bin 'Ali. He died at the age of 72.

down, even though I be angry. By that God Who sent me to mankind with the truth, even when I am angry, I utter nothing but the truth.” Thus, he did not say: “I have no anger.” Instead, he said: “My anger does not take me outside of truth.”

One day ‘Ayishah (R) was angry. The Messenger (S) said: “Thy devil has come!” She said: “And dost thou not have a devil?” He replied: “Yes, but God Most High aids me against him so that he is under my control. He does not say anything except the good.” He did not say: “I do not have a devil of anger.”

EXCURSUS: [THE TRIUMPH OF GOD’S UNITY CONCEALS ANGER]¹¹⁷⁹

Know that even though the root of anger can never be rooted out from the inner being, yet it is right that a person be dominated by God’s Unity in some conditions—or most conditions—and consider everything that happens as though it were from God Most High. Then anger is cloaked by God’s Unity and nothing of one’s own is seen. Just as when someone is struck by a stone, in no circumstance does he become angry at the stone, even if the root of anger is entrenched in his inner being, for the stone did not assault him. It was caused by the person who threw the stone. If a ruler signs an order for someone’s execution, that person does not become angry at the pen with which the signature was written, because he knows that the pen is employed (by the ruler) and that the pen did not move of itself, even though it moved.¹¹⁸⁰

Likewise, a person who is dominated by God’s Unity necessarily recognizes that all mankind are forced by necessity in that which occurs to them. Indeed, even though movement is controlled by power, yet power is controlled by the will and controlled by desire. The will is not at the disposal of a person. Rather, (it is) a desire that has been imposed upon him, willingly or unwillingly. When the desire has been sent and the power given, the act will necessarily be accomplished. Therefore, it is like the stone which has been thrown at him. The stone causes pain and suffering, but he does not become angry at the stone. Thus, if his sustenance comes from a sheep and the sheep dies, he is troubled but he does not become wrathful. Should someone kill the sheep, it must be the same (to him) if the light of God’s Unity dominates.

However, the triumph of God’s Unity is not continuous at that limit. Instead, it is light a flash of lighting. Human nature becomes apparent in (its) attention to the extant causes. Many people are like that in some circumstances. It is not that the root of anger has been extirpated. When the human perpetrator is not seen, the sorrow of anger

¹¹⁷⁹ From the AA text.

¹¹⁸⁰ HK has the next paragraph beginning another excursus, but AA’s text does not make this division, continuing without interruption. We follow AA here.

does not appear. It is like the stone which hits him. Indeed, it may be that there is no victory of God's Unity involved. Rather, one's soul is so engaged in a more important work that the anger is obscured and does not become apparent.

A person execrated Salman (R) (to his face). (Salman) said: "If at the Resurrection the pan of my bad deeds (on the scales of judgment) is heavier, I am worse than what thou sayest. If it is lighter than what thou sayest, what have I to fear?" Someone cursed Rabi' Khaytham. (Rabi') said: "Between me and heaven there is an obstruction which I am busy cutting. If I cut it away, what have I to fear from thy words? If I do not, what thou sayest is less (bad) than I am." Both of them were so immersed in thinking about the Hereafter that their anger did not show itself.

[A person was imprecating Abu Bakr Siddiq (R). (Abu Bakr) said: "There is much more that is hidden from thee." He was so involved with himself that his anger did not appear.]¹¹⁸¹ Someone doubted Malik Dinar (R). (Malik) said: "No one has (truly) known me except thee." Someone said something to Sha'bi (R). (Sha'bi) said: "If thou speakest the truth, may God Most High forgive me. If thou liest, may God Most High forgive thee."

So, these states show that it is permissible for anger to be suppressed by these states. And, it is permissible that one who loves God Most High not become angry with someone unknown. When a cause occurs, the love for God Most High covers his anger. Just as when someone has a beloved who speaks ill of (the lover's) child. The lover knows that he wants no unkindness to befall his child; but he overlooks it. The triumph of his love is such that he does not take offense at that unkindness and does not become angry.

Therefore, a person must deal with any of these provocations so that he stifle his anger. If he cannot, he must indeed defeat this impulse so that it not become intractable and act contrary to the Law and reason.

EXCURSUS: [THE TREATMENT OF ANGER IS OBLIGATORY]¹¹⁸²

Know that the treatment of anger and its discipline are religious obligations, for (anger) carries most people off to hell and from it many sins are born. Its treatment is of two kinds: The similitude of one (kind) is that of the purgative which tears out its roots and material from within. The similitude of the other is that of oxymel¹¹⁸³ which soothes and does not carry away matter. As for the purgative, it is that one search out what

¹¹⁸¹ This anecdote is taken from the AA text.

¹¹⁸² From the AA text.

¹¹⁸³ Oxymel: a mixture of vinegar and honey

the internal cause of anger is, tear out its causes by the root; and the causes are five:

THE FIRST CAUSE is pride. For the proud person angers at minor lapses of word or treatment against the respect (he feels he is due). This anger must be defeated with humility, and one must understand that one is of the same genus as other servants (of God). Any superiority is of good character. Pride is a bad trait and cannot be expunged save by humility.

THE SECOND CAUSE is the vanity in which one is self-absorbed. The remedy is to know oneself. All of the treatments for pride and vanity will be discussed in the appropriate place.

THE THIRD CAUSE is jesting which, in most circumstances, leads to anger. One must busy oneself seriously with becoming acquainted with the Hereafter, acquiring a good character, and refraining from frivolity. In the same way, excessive laughter and mockery lead to anger. One must protect oneself from these, for whoever mocks others is mocked himself. Therefore, if another mocks him, he has mocked himself.

THE FOURTH CAUSE is casting blame and faultfinding. They also become causes of anger for both sides. Its remedy is that one know that whoever is not without fault should not blame others. No one is without fault.

THE FIFTH CAUSE is the avarice and greed for the increase of property and rank, for with that, need becomes great. Whoever is a miser becomes angry when a single grain is taken from him. Whoever is greedy becomes angry if one bite of food is lost to him. All of these are bad traits of character and the roots of anger.

[THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TREATMENT OF ANGER]

The treatment of all of these is theoretical and practical.

As for the theoretical, it is that one understand its detriment and evil, and the amount of damage it does to him in worldly affairs and in religion, so that it will become repugnant to him in his soul. Then, he must occupy himself with the practical treatment. This is so the he will become changed so as to rise up against these traits, for the treatment of all characteristics is opposition (to them), as we have discussed concerning self-discipline.¹¹⁸⁴

A major cause for the provocation of anger and bad traits is association with people who are overcome by their anger. It may be that they call this bravery and steadfastness and take pride in it and tell

¹¹⁸⁴ See Chapter I above, in this Pillar.

stories: "Such-and-such a great man killed someone for a word and destroyed so-and-so's house and belongings and no one had the courage¹¹⁸⁵ to say anything against him, because he is a manly man, and men are thus!" Overlooking (slights) is considered self-contempt, dastardly, and unmanly. So they call anger—which is the characteristic of dogs—manliness and bravery; and mildness—which is the characteristic of (God's) messengers—they call dastardly and unmanly!

This is the work of Satan who, with deception and ugly words, keeps (them) away from a good character and, with pleasant words, invites (them) to a bad character. An intelligent person would know that if the arousal of anger were a part of manliness, then would not women, children, feeble oldsters, and the sick be closer to anger? It is obvious that those people anger more quickly. Indeed, there is no manliness greater than that one confront one's own anger. This is the attribute of the prophets and saints. The other: that is the attribute of Kurds, Turks, and (desert) Arabs, and of people who are closer to predatory animals and beasts. Keep looking to see whether greatness is that which resembles the prophets or that which resembles fools and the negligent!

EXCURSUS: [THE THEORETICAL TREATMENT]

That which has been said is a purgative, its purpose to void the substance of anger. So, that person who cannot root out that substance must calm it when anger is excited. It may be calmed by an oxymel compounded of the sweetness of knowledge and the bitterness of patience. The treatment for all (personal) traits is a compound of knowledge and action. However, the knowledge is that of the verses (of the Quran) and the Traditions (of the Prophet) which have come down about censuring anger and the spiritual merit for the person who suppresses his anger, reconsiders—as we have described—and says to himself: "God Most High has more power over thee than thou hast over Him, and God's repugnance for thee is greater than thy repugnance for (the person who incites thine anger). If thou givest rein to thine anger (against that person), what surety dost thou have that at the Resurrection He will not give rein to His anger against thee?" As when the Messenger (S) sent a serving girl on an errand and she returned late. He said: "If it were not for the retaliation at the Resurrection, I would have beaten thee."

Another is that one say to oneself: "Thine anger is because the affair proceeded the way God Most High wished, not the way thou didst. This is contending with the Godhead." If thine anger is not stilled with

¹¹⁸⁵ "courage" (*zahrāh*), literally: gall bladder, boldness. More colloquially, one might say: "no one had the guts to say anything..."

these reasons which are related to the Hereafter, one should marshal worldly motives and say: "If I give rein to my anger, it may happen that he too will be prompted to opposition and retaliate. One should not minimize one's enemy. If, for example, he is a slave who is deficient in service, when he becomes frightened, he may meditate some treachery or conspiracy."

One should also recall one's own ugly image (when angry). How ugly and variable the exterior becomes! It becomes the image of a wolf attacking a person, and its interior becomes all aflame, in the image of a ravenous dog. It usually happens that when one intends to overlook (the offense), Satan says to him: "This will be attributed to thy weakness and baseness, and will detract from thy dignity. Thou wilt be held in contempt by the people." One must reply: "No glory comes from that. For a person should take the way of the prophets and seek the pleasure of God Most High. It is better that people despise me in this world today than that I be despised at the Resurrection tomorrow." These and the their like are the theoretical treatment.

[THE PRACTICAL TREATMENT]

As for the practical treatment, it is that one say aloud: *I seek refuge with God from the accursed Satan*. The Practice of the Prophet is that if one is standing one should sit, and if one is sitting, one should lay one's side on the ground. If one does not become calmed by this, one should purify himself with cold water, for the Messenger (S) said: "Anger is of (the nature of) fire; it is extinguished with water." According to one narrative, one should prostrate oneself, placing one's face on the earth in order to realize with that (gesture) that one has come from the earth and is a servant (of God) and so that anger will not touch him. One day 'Umar (R) was angered and called for water. He sniffed it into his nostrils and said: "Anger comes from the devil and departs with this." One day Abu Dharr (R) fought with some one. He said: "*O son of the red woman!*"—he insulted his mother, saying she was ruddy in color; that is, she was a slave. The Messenger said: "I heard that thou didst insult someone today through his mother. Know that thou art not superior to any black or red person, except that thou be more pious than he." Abu Dharr went off to apologize to that person, and that person came and made peace with Abu Dharr.

When 'Ayishah (R) would become angry, the Messenger (S) would take her by the nose and say: "Dear 'Ayishah! Say: *O God, the Lord of the Prophet Muhammad, forgive me for my sin and expel the anger from my heart and keep me from the turmoil of error.*" Saying this is also a Practice (of the Prophet).

EXCURSUS: [HOW MUCH GIVING REIN TO ANGER IS LAWFUL]

Know that if a person does some injustice or utters vulgar or terrifying words (to one), it is preferable to remain silent and not respond. However, remaining silent is not a duty yet, not every response is permissible. Indeed, returning execration for execration and calumny for calumny is not lawful, for such provocations, punishment becomes necessary. But, if someone responds in harsh words in which there is no lie, it is lawful; that resembles a kind of legal requital.

Even though the Messenger (S) has said: "If a person criticizes thee in what is true about thee, do not criticize him with his faults," this is in the way of a recommendation and not offering a response is not an obligation when there is no imprecation or accusation of adultery. The grounds for this are that the Messenger (S) said: "*Two persons reviling each other, what they have said is upon him who was first until the oppressed one surpasses (him).*" He said: "Every two persons who speak unkindly to each other, whatever they say, the one who began is at fault until the injured party exceeds the limits (in his responses). So he should cease replying before he reaches that point."

'Ayishah (R) used to say: "The wives of the Messenger (S) gave Fatimah a message: 'Tell the Messenger to be fair amongst us and 'Ayishah, but thou lovest her more and incline towards her.'" The Messenger (S) had been asleep. He said: 'O Fatimah, dost thou not love that which I love?' She said: 'I do.' He said: 'Then love 'Ayishah because I love her.' Then (Fatimah) went to them and repeated what he had said. They said: 'This does not satisfy us.' Zaynab¹¹⁸⁶ (R) was one of the Messenger's wives. She claimed to be my equal in the Messenger's (S) love. She was sent by them and said: 'Abu Bakr's daughter does this and that and says unkind things.' I stayed silent in case he might give me permission to reply. When he gave permission, I came in to answer back. I was answering her and speaking unkindly to her until my mouth became dry and she was left helpless. Then the Messenger (S) said: 'She is the daughter of Abu Bakr.' That is: 'Ye will not be able to cope with her with words.'"

So, this is the evidence that answering is lawful when it is right and not a lie, as one says: 'Fool! Ignoramus! Be ashamed of thyself and shut up!' for no person is devoid of foolishness or ignorance. One must train the tongue to be accustomed to using words that are not excessively ugly, so that when one is angry, one not resort to vulgarity, as when one says: "Promise-breaker! Turncoat! Knave! Unworthy! Wretch!" and the

¹¹⁸⁶ Zaynab: Zaynab bint Khuzaymah was the fifth wife of the Prophet. She had been widowed and perhaps divorced previously. She lived only eight months with the Prophet, dying AH4/625CE. She was one of the two of the Prophet's wives to die in his lifetime, the other being his first wife, Khadijah.

like. In short, when it comes to answering back, it is difficult to keep within bounds. For this reason, it is preferred that one not answer back.

Someone was speaking ill of Abu Bakr (R) in the presence of the Messenger (S), who remained silent. When Abu Bakr (R) began to reply, the Messenger (S) rose. (Abu Bakr) said: "Until now thou hast been sitting down. Now that I am about to reply, thou hast risen?" He said: "As long as thou wert silent, an angel was continuously replying on thy behalf. Now that thou hast started to speak, I did not want to sit in the same place with Satan."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Human beings have been created in different classes. There is one who becomes angry slowly and becomes pleased slowly. There is another who becomes angry quickly and becomes pleased quickly. One is the opposite of the other. The best of you is he who becomes angry slowly and becomes pleased quickly. The worst of you is he who becomes angry quickly and becomes pleased slowly."

EXCURSUS: [CONCERNING HATRED]

Know that blessedness follows when someone swallows his anger by means of choice and (the power of) religion. However, if he swallows it by reason of weakness or necessity, it collects inside him and ferments and turns into hatred. The Messenger (S) says: "The believer is not full of hate." Therefore, hatred is the offspring of anger, and from it eight grandchildren are born, each one of which is a cause of the destruction of religion:

First: Envy, so that one is saddened by the happiness of that person and made happy by his sorrow.

Second: Malicious joy,¹¹⁸⁷ that a person rejoice when (his enemy) is afflicted with a calamity, and make that apparent.

Third: That one restrain one's tongue and not reply to the other's greeting of "Peace."

Fourth: That one look upon him with hatred and scorn.

Fifth: That one talk about him: backbiting, lying, and insulting; that one lay open that person's private matters and his secrets.

Sixth: That one mimic him and ridicule him.

Seventh: That one strike and injure him when the opportunity occurs, or that one persuade someone else to beat him.

Eighth: That one commit some shortcoming in executing his rights and not honor the connection of kinship, nor repay debts to him, nor turn oppression away from him, nor seek pardon from him.

¹¹⁸⁷ "malicious joy" (*shamātat*) rejoicing at someone else's misfortune, the German *schadenfreude*, for which there is no exact single-word English equivalent.

So, if there is a person whom religion dominates, and who does not commit any sins, there is at least this: that he withholds good deeds from him and does not show friendship to him. He does not aid (the other) in his affairs and does not sit with him for the remembrance of God Most High, nor does he offer (the other person) praise and supplications. All of these things detract from (the aggrieved person's) stature, and the harm of this is great. When Mistah,¹¹⁸⁸ who was a relative of Abu Bakr, spoke about 'Ayishah, (R) during the Incident of the Lie.¹¹⁸⁹ Abu Bakr, who had been paying (Mistah's) stipend, took the money back and swore that he would never give him money again. (At that,) this verse was revealed: *And let not those who possess bounty and plenty among you, to the place where He said: Do ye not wish that God should forgive you? (Q. 24:22)*¹¹⁹⁰ (The Messenger) said: "Do not swear that ye will not do good to a person who is unkind to you. Do ye not desire to like that God Most High will forgive you?" Abu Bakr (R) said: "By God, I want that!" and he resumed paying the stipend.

Therefore, anyone who harbors a grudge against someone is not free of three concerns: [First], he either struggles against himself in order to do (his enemy) some good deed and increase his consideration — this is the degree of the truly righteous; or [second], he does not do any good deeds, nor any unbecoming deeds — this is the degree of the abstemious; or [third], he does rude things (to him) and does not do any good things — this is the degree of the vicious and the oppressors.

There is no intimacy (with God) greater than this: that thou doest good to the person who does evil to thee. If thou art not able (to do that), at least forgive him; for the virtue of forgiveness is great.

The Messenger (S) said: "There are three things that I may swear to: one is that no property will be lost in (giving) voluntary charity; another is that there is no one who has forgiven a person, upon whom God Most High has not bestowed an increase in honor at the Resurrection; and the third is that no one opens the door of importuning and begging to himself that God Most High does not open the door of

¹¹⁸⁸ Mistah: Mistah was the nickname of 'Awf bin Uthathah. He was one of those who spoke ill of 'Ayishah because of an incident during the expedition against the Banu Mustaliq. Abu Bakr swore to cut off Mistah's stipend, even though he was a relative. At that point, the verse prohibiting the cutting off of relatives was revealed (Q. 24:11) and Abu Bakr, hearing that, continued the stipend.

¹¹⁸⁹ "Incident of the Lie": When 'Ayishah's camel fell behind and there was an accusation of impropriety.

¹¹⁹⁰ The complete text of Q. 24:24 is as follows: *And let not those of you who possess bounty and plenty among you swear off giving to kinsmen and the poor and those who emigrate in the way of God; but let them pardon and forgive. Do ye not wish that God should forgive you? God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.*

poverty (to him).¹¹⁹¹ And 'Ayishah (R) says: "I never saw the Messenger (S) retaliate against anyone with respect to himself, but if it detracted from the right of God, his anger had no limit. When choosing between two alternatives, he never chose that which was not easier for the people, unless there was some sin in it." 'Uqbah bin 'Amir¹¹⁹² (R) used to say: "The Messenger (S) took my hand and said: 'Should I not inform thee what the best behavior of the people of the world and the Hereafter is? That whatever someone takes from thee, thou givest to him;¹¹⁹³ whatever someone deprives thee of, thou givest to him; and that thou forgivest whoever is unjust to thee."

And the Messenger (S) said that Moses (A) had asked: "O Lord God, who is the more beloved of Thy servants to Thee?" He replied: "He who forgives even though he has the power (to retaliate)." And (Moses) (A) said: "Whoever supplicates (God) for misfortune to his oppressor, negates his own rights."

And when the Messenger (S) conquered Makkah and captured the Quraysh—and they had tormented him very much and they were afraid that they would be executed—he placed his hand on the door of the Ka'bah and said: "God is One and has no partner. He has fulfilled His promise and given aid to His Own servant and has routed His enemies. What do ye see and what do ye say?" They said: "What can we say except 'good'? We await thy generosity. Today the power is thy hands." He said: "I say today that which my brother said. When Yusuf (A) had his brothers in his power, he said: *'No reproach this day shall be upon you. God will forgive you.'*" (Q. 12:92) He granted them all security and said: "No one shall bother you."

And the Messenger (S) said: "When the people stand on the fields of the Resurrection, a herald will cry out: 'Arise! The reward of whoever has forgiven another is with God Most High.' Thousands upon thousands of people shall stand up and enter Paradise without any accounting, for they have forgiven people."

Mu'awiyah (R) would say: "When angry, be patient, so that ye may find a great opportunity. When ye obtain (the opportunity) and great power, forgive." A person who had committed treason was brought before Hisham.¹¹⁹⁴ Hisham became angry and said: "Dost thou quarrel in front of me?" He said: "*God Most High has said: On the day when every soul will come disputing for itself.*" (Q. 16:111) One may dispute before

¹¹⁹¹ That is, if one starts to beg and importune, God will open the door of poverty to him.

¹¹⁹² 'Uqbah bin 'Āmir: a Companion of the Prophet. He was one of the Helpers who participated in the first pledge of 'Aqabah.

¹¹⁹³ "Whatever someone takes from thee, thou givest to him": literally, "Whatever someone cuts off (*biburad*) from thee, thou graffest (*paywandī*) onto him."

¹¹⁹⁴ Hisham: Hisham bin 'Abd al-Malik, see Note 810.

God Most High in stating an excuse; why can that not be done in thy presence?" (Hisham) said: "Come and say what thou wert saying."

Something was stolen from Ibn Mas'ud (R). The people were cursing the thief. He said: "O Lord God, if he took it out of some need, let him be blessed by it! If he took for the audaciousness of sinning, let it be his last sin!" Fudayl (bin) 'Iyad (R) says: "I saw a man whose gold was stolen while he was circumambulating (the Ka'bah). He was weeping. I said: 'Art thou weeping because of the gold?' he replied: 'No, I visualized him standing with me at the Resurrection, not having any excuse.' I felt mercy for him." A group of prisoners were brought before 'Abd al-Malik.¹¹⁹⁵ One of their chiefs said: "God Most High gave thee what thou lovedst most, and that was victory. Now thou givest what He likes most, and that is forgiveness." And he forgave them all.

Therefore, when anger appears, one must forgive. One must be kind in affairs so that anger itself (has no need to) appear. The Messenger (S) said: "O 'Ayishah, whoever has had a portion of kindness has found his portion of religion and the world. Whoever has been deprived of kindness has remained deprived of the good of the world and religion." And he said: "God Most High is a friend and He loves kindness. That which is given with kindness is never given with harshness." 'Ayishah said: "One should observe kindness in all affairs, for nothing which is touched by kindness does not become adorned by it. Kindness should not be cut off in any matter, lest it turn ugly."

[CONCERNING ENVY] DISCLOSING ENVY AND ITS DETRIMENTS

Know that hatred arises from anger, and envy arises from hatred. Envy is one of the Destroyers. The Messenger (S) said: "Envy consumes good deeds as fire consumes dry wood." And he (S) said: "There are three things of which no one is devoid: suspicion, bad omens, and envy. Let me teach you what their treatment is: When thou art suspicious, make not thyself an investigator and do not fixate upon it. When thou takest a bad omen, do not have confidence in it. When envy appears, restrain thy tongue and hand from having commerce with it." And he (S) said: "That which destroyed many peoples before you has begun to appear among you; that is envy, enmity, and hostility. By the God in Whose command is the soul of Muhammad, ye will not enter heaven so long as ye do not have faith. And ye will not have faith so long as ye do not love one another. Let me inform you how this is achieved: Greet one another with 'peace,' openly."

¹¹⁹⁵ 'Abd al-Malik: the son of caliph Marwān and the fifth Umayyad caliph at Damascus (rgd. AH65-86/685-705CE) and the father of four caliphs including Hisham, see Note 810. He was one of the three most competent caliphs of the dynasty.

Moses (A) saw a man under the shade of the Throne. (Moses) yearned for that man's place and said: "He is one of God's beloved persons." (Moses) asked (God): "Who is he and what is his name?" (God) did not give his name and said: "I shall inform thee of his acts: He never envied another, he never disobeyed his mother and father, and he never calumniated (another)."

Zechariah (A) said: "God Most High says: 'The envier is the enemy of My bounty. He becomes angry at My decrees and does not like the apportioning that I have made amongst (My) servants.'"

The Messenger (S) said: "Six classes of people go to hell for six sins without any reckoning: oppressive rulers, partisan Arabs,¹¹⁹⁶ the prideful rich, deceiving merchants, ignorant villagers, and envious scholars."

Anas¹¹⁹⁷ (R) says: "One day I was sitting with the Messenger (S). He said: 'This moment one of the people of heaven will enter.' A man from among the Helpers¹¹⁹⁸ entered. His shoes were hanging from his left hand and water was dripping from his beard and mustache because he had purified himself. The next day, (the Messenger) said the same thing and the man appeared again. This happened three times. 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As (R) wanted to know about his actions. He approached him and said: 'I have fought with my mother and father and I would like to stay with thee for three nights.' (The man) replied: 'So be it.' ('Abdullah) watched him during those three nights and saw no unusual behavior, except that he would wake up and remember God Most High. Then, he said to him: 'I have not fought with my father, but the Messenger (S) says such-and-such things about thee. I wanted to become acquainted with thine actions.' He said: 'It is what thou hast seen.' When I went away, he called to me. He said: 'There is one thing: I have never envied anyone for something he has gotten.' I exclaimed: 'So, thy degree is from that!'"

'Awn bin 'Abdullah (R) was giving advice to a king. He said: "Keep away from pride for it is the first sin committed against God. It was out of pride that Iblis refused to prostrate himself before Adam. Keep away from greed, for Adam was expelled from heaven because of his greed. Keep away from envy, for the first blood that was shed unjustly was done so out of envy, when the son of Adam slew his

¹¹⁹⁶ "partisan Arabs" (*ʿarab bi-taʿassub*): or "bigoted/superstitious/fanatical (Arabs)." Since a less-commented upon aspect of the Prophet's mission was the effort to replace Arab tribalism (and by extension, racism) with a universal brotherhood in Islam, as when he bound the emigrants from Makkah with the Helpers in Madinah across tribal lines and exalted the status of the African black Bilal, the translator has selected "partisan" from among the several possibilities that *bi-taʿassub* offers.

¹¹⁹⁷ Anas: Anas Malik, see Note 358.

¹¹⁹⁸ "Helpers" (*Anṣār*): the people of Madinah who gave shelter to the Prophet and the emigrants from Makkah and who joined them.

brother. And when there is talk of the Companions, or of the attributes of God Most High or stars are discussed, keep silent and hold thy tongue."

Bakr bin 'Abdullah¹¹⁹⁹ (R) says: "There was a man (at the court of) a king. Every day he would stand up and say: 'Do good to the doer of good. The bad deeds of the doer of bad will suffice. Leave him to his own deeds.' That king valued him for those words. Someone envied (the adviser) and said to the king that (the adviser) had said that a bad smell came from the king's mouth. The king said: 'What is the proof of this?' He said: 'It is that thou summonest him to thyself and see that he puts his hand on his nose so as not to smell the odor.' Then (the envier) came and took (the adviser) to his house and gave him food in which there was garlic. Then the king summoned (the adviser). He put his hand over his mouth. (The king) supposed that (the envier) had spoken the truth. It was the custom of the king that no one other than himself would write important decrees. He wrote to one of his slaves: 'Cut off the head of the deliverer of this letter. Stuff his skin with straw and send it to me.' He wrote it, sealed it and gave it to (the adviser). When he went out, that envier saw him cheerful. He said: 'What is that?' (The other) said: 'The decree of the king.' (The envier) said: 'Let me have it.' (The other) said: 'All right.' (The envier) took it from him and delivered it to that official.¹²⁰⁰ (The official) said: "In this there is a command that I kill thee and fill the skin of thy head with straw and send it to the king.' (The envier) cried: 'O God, God! He wrote this about someone else. Refer it to the king.' (The official) said: 'There is no referral in the king's order,' and he slew him. The next day the man stood before the king as usual and said what he usually said. The king was astonished. He said: 'What didst thou do with that letter?' (The man) replied: 'So-and-so asked me to give it to him.' The king said: 'He told me that thou said such-and-such (about me).' (The man) replied: 'I did not say that.' (The king) said: 'Then why didst thou cover thy mouth with thy hand?' He said: "That man had given me some food in which there was much garlic.' The king said: 'Go and speak those words as usual: 'Requite the doer of good for his goodness and let the actions of the doer of evil suffice for him.' And it sufficed for that man.'"

Ibn Sirin (R) says: "I have not envied anyone for the world, for if one is destined for Paradise, how much is the world itself against the comfort that will come to him? If he is destined for hell, then what benefit is there for him from these comforts when he will go to the fire?"

Someone asked Hasan Basri (R): "Does the believer envy?" He said: "Hast thou forgotten the sons of Jacob? A believer envies. If it is a sorrow that he keeps inside his breast and does not let it out by deed, it

¹¹⁹⁹ Bakr bin 'Abdullah: Bakr bin 'Abdullāh al-Mazani, see Note 1104.

¹²⁰⁰ It should be pointed out that court officials were often trusted slaves.

has no harm." Abu Darda (R) said: "There is neither happiness nor envy for whoever remembers death often."

CONCERNING THE TRUE NATURE OF ENVY

Know that envy is that thou dislike it when someone gets some blessing and thou desirest the disappearance of that blessing. This is forbidden on the evidence of Traditions and on the evidence that this is repugnance for the decree of God Most High. It is an inner malice; for the desire for the loss of some blessing for another that will not be thine is nothing other than malice. However, if thou desirest that thou have something like that, but do not wish for its loss to another, and do not dislike (his having) it, then it is called emulation, and also called competition. In religious matters, this is praiseworthy and may be an obligation.

God Most High says: *For this, let (all) those strive who strive.* (Q. 83:26) And He said: *Race one with another for forgiveness from your Lord.* (Q. 57:21) That is, put yourselves ahead of one another.

The Messenger (S) said: "There is no envy save for two things: one is (for) the man whom God Most High has granted knowledge and wealth and who continually works with his wealth according to his knowledge. The other is (for) the person to whom knowledge has been given without wealth. He says: 'If I had been given it, I would have done the same.' The reward for both is equal. If the wealth is spent in sin and the other says: 'If it were I, I would have done the same.' The sin for both is the equal."

Consequently, this (type of) competition is also called envy, but there is no displeasure at the blessings of another. Displeasure is never lawful except for the blessings which the sinner and the oppressor come by that are the instruments of their corruption and tyranny. It is lawful that thou desire the loss of (their) blessings. For in reality, thou hast desired the elimination of the tyrant and corruption, not the elimination of the blessings. The sign of this is that when they repent, that displeasure does not linger.

Here there is a point: another person has been given a religious blessing and one desires the same for oneself. When it does not come, it may be that one will disapprove of that difference. So, the elimination of the difference through the loss of that blessing may lighten his heart more than the (other's) retention of the blessing. It is to be feared that one's nature will not necessarily be devoid of this, but when this (feeling) is repugnant, it will be as though, if the matter were in his own hands, he would not turn away that blessing from (the other). One will not be held answerable for this much in one's nature.

DISCLOSING THE REMEDY FOR ENVY

Know that envy is a great illness of the soul. Its remedy is a compound of theory and practice.

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL, it is that one know that envy is injurious to oneself—in this world and the next, while it is beneficial to the envied person—in this world and the next.

As for that which is detrimental to (the envier) in this world, it is that he is always in (a state of) sorrow, grief, and torment. For, every moment, (he is concerned) with the blessings that the other receives. He himself is in as much distress as he wishes his enemy to be in. He is in the same situation that he wishes for his own enemy, for there is no sorrow greater than the sorrow of envy. What kind of a fool is it he who keeps himself miserable because of his enemy, while (the enemy) is not harmed by his envy?

There is a time limit for that (envied) blessing in the decree of God Most High. It is neither before nor after, neither more nor less, for its cause is the Eternal Decree. Some interpret this as good fortune. Whatever it is called, all agree that there is no alteration of that (divine decree). It is for this that a prophet (A) when he was afflicted by domineering wife, used to complain to God Most High. A revelation came: "Flee from her until her time expires, for that length of time has been ordained in the eternal decree and cannot be changed." A prophet (A) was made helpless by calamities; he supplicated and wept much. A revelation came to him: "That day when I decreed the heavens and the earth, this was thy portion. What dost thou say? Should I reapportion it for thee?"

If a person wishes to obliterate (another's) blessing with his envy, the harm redounds upon himself, for his own blessings are also obliterated by this envy. Too, envy of the unbelievers obliterates the blessing of one's own faith, as God Most High says: *A party of the People of the Book long to make you go astray.* (Q. 3:69) Therefore, envy becomes the coin of the torment of the envier!

However, the damage in the next world is greater, for one's anger is at the decree of God Most High and one's rejection is of his portion, which He has appointed in the perfection of His wisdom. No one can fathom the mystery of that. What betrayal of God's Unity can be greater than this? And then, he has rejected the compassion and counsel of the Muslims because he desires misfortune for them. Iblis is his companion in this desire. What evil can be greater than this?

And as for the envied, he has a benefit in this world: it is that what could he wish from this world more than that his envier be always in torment. What torment is greater than envy? No tyrant more resembles the oppressed than does the envier. The envied, if he receives news of

thy death or that thou hast been liberated from the torment of that envy, is saddened, for he always wishes to be blessed by being envied while thou art in the misery of envy.

As for (the envied one's) religious benefit, it is that he is oppressed by thee because of thine envy. It may be that thou act inimically to him with words. That will be the cause of thy good deeds' being transferred to his register and his evil deeds' being placed upon thy shoulders. Therefore, (while) thou didst want his worldly blessings to depart from him, they did not; and his blessings in the next world have been increased while for thee, the torment of the world has become immediate and the foundation for the torment of the next world has been laid!

So, thou didst suppose that thou were thine own friend and his enemy; but when thou looked, [it was the opposite:].¹²⁰¹ Thou wert his friend and thine own enemy! Thou keepest thyself in misery while gladdening Iblis who is thy greatest enemy! When Iblis looked at thee and saw that thou dost not have the blessings of knowledge, piety, rank, and property, he feared that if thou were satisfied with that (state of deprivation), the spiritual reward of the Hereafter would come into thy possession. He wanted the spiritual reward of the Hereafter also to be lost to thee, and it was. For, whoever loves the knowledgeable and the religious and is agreeable to their rank and retinue (while he has none) will be among them tomorrow.¹²⁰² As the Messenger (S) says: "Whoever loves someone will be with (that person) tomorrow."

It is said that a man is either a savant, a student, or their admirer. The envier is deprived of the spiritual reward of all three of these (states). The similitude of the envier is that he is like a person who throws a stone to strike his enemy. It misses him and returns to hit him in the right eye and blind it. His anger increases. Again he throws, harder, and it returns to strike him in the other eye and blind it. He throws (a stone) another time and it returns to strike him on the head. He does this while his enemy is unharmed. His enemies see him and laugh at him. This is the condition of the envier: the object of Satan's derision. All of these are the evils of envy. So, if it leads to raising one's hand and unleashing one's tongue in enmity, slander, lying, and the repudiation of God, its iniquity itself is great. Therefore, whoever realizes that envy will be a fatal poison for himself—if he be intelligent—will let it depart.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL REMEDY, is to strive to root out the causes of envy from one's inner being. For, the causes of envy are pride, vanity, hostility, the love of rank, and the like, as we have said concerning the

¹²⁰¹ From the AA text.

¹²⁰² Tomorrow: that is, in the next life, in the Hereafter.

essence of anger. These roots must be extirpated through earnest striving. This is the purgative so that the envy itself may definitely not exist. But when it appears, it may be stilled by opposing everything that envy commands. When it commands: "Make some snide remark about him!" one praises him. When it commands: "Slight him!" one gives him aid so that he hears it and his heart is gladdened. When he is pleased, a beam of light (from him) falls upon one's heart in reflection. One's heart is gladdened and the hostility is ended. As God Most High has said: *Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then, lo! he, between whom and thee there was enmity, (will become) as though he were a bosom friend.* (Q. 41:34) Here Satan may say to thee that if thou be humble and praise him, it will be interpreted as thy weakness. Thou art the chooser: either obey the command of God Most High, or the command of Iblis!

Know that this is a great and potent medicine, but it is bitter. It cannot be endured, except through the strength of knowledge by which a person understands that his salvation in religion and the world lies in it, and his perdition in religion and the world lies in envy. No medicine is possible without tolerating bitterness and pain. Greed must be cut off with that. When a disease strikes, the body must be placed in discomfort in the hope of a cure. If not, the disease may lead to destruction, and that is certainly greater than the pain.

EXCURSUS: [HOW THE BANE OF ENVY MUST BE ROOTED OUT OF THE SOUL]¹²⁰³

Know that if thou strivest earnestly much, usually thou wilt find a difference between the soul of the person who has troubled thee and that of the person who loves thee. Comfort and obligation are not equal in thy mind; indeed, thou wilt naturally despise the comfort of the enemy. Thou art not required to change that nature, for it is not in thy power. However, thou art responsible for two things: one is that thou necessarily do not disclose this (feeling) by word or deed; and the other is that thou dislike this trait in thyself and reject it with thine intellect, and that thou be desirous of the elimination of that trait. When thou hast done this, thou hast escaped the sin of envy.

If thou dost not express it in any manner, but there is a repugnance inside thee that thou continue to find this trait in thyself, some are of the opinion that thou art not accountable for this. The correct view is that thou art accountable, for envy is forbidden and this is the work of the soul, not the work of the body. Whoever desires pain for a Muslim and sorrows at his happiness will certainly be punished, unless he despises this trait. In that case, he will escape the sin. However, a

¹²⁰³ From the AA text.

person escapes envy completely when God's Unity conquers him. For him, there is neither friend nor enemy. Instead, he sees all with the eye of servitude to God Most High. He sees affairs as all from the One. This state is rare, like the lightning that flashes and departs. Usually it does not remain constant.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE TREATMENT FOR THE LOVE OF THIS WORLD AND DISCLOSING THAT THE LOVE OF THE WORLD IS THE BEGINNING OF ALL SINS

Know that the world is the source of all evil and the love for it the root of all sin. What can be more inauspicious than that it be the enemy of God Most High and the enemy of the lovers of God and the enemy of the enemies of God? As for the enmity with God, it is that (the world) blocks the way of God Most High's servants so that they may not reach Him. As for (the world's) enmity with the lovers of God Most High, it is that it displays itself (alluringly) and it adorns itself attractively in their eyes so that they are continually drinking the bitter draught of abstaining from it and are always suffering. As for its enmity with the enemies of God Most High, it is that it draws them into love for itself with deceit and trickery. When they become its lovers, it distances itself from them and goes into the hands of their enemies, as a harlot passes from man to man, so that in this world one sometimes suffers the sorrow of possessing it and at other times the regret of separation from it. In the Hereafter, one will experience the anger of God Most High and His punishment. One will ~~not~~ leap out of this trap, except the person who truly understands its reality and its harm and who is wary of it, as one is wary of magicians. As the Messenger (S) said: "Abstain from the world, for it is more magical than Harut and Marut."

We have discussed the real truth about the world—what it is, its harm, and its deceptions—in the Third Topic of the Prolegomena at the beginning of this book. In that, we have cited many Traditions censuring it and about which there are many Quranic verses. The object of all of the books of the prophets and the sending of prophets is this: to call people away from the world to the Hereafter and to explain to them the harm of the world, its calamities, and its suffering so that they may beware of it.

DISCLOSING THE HARM OF THE WORLD AND THE CENSURING OF THE WORLD IN THE TRADITIONS¹²⁰⁴

Know that one day the Messenger (S) passed by a dead sheep and said: "Do ye see how despicable this carrion is so that a person does not look at it? By that God at Whose command is the life of Muhammad, the world to God Most High is more despicable than that. If it were worth a gnat's wing to Him, He would not have given the unbeliever a

¹²⁰⁴ Traditions: Ghazzali uses the word *akhbār* generally, to include both Traditions of the Prophet and the traditions of other prophets and saints as well. See Note 1209.

swallow of water." And he said: "The world is accursed. Everything that is in it is accursed, except that which is for God Most High." And he said: "Love of the world is the beginning of all sins." And he said: "Whoever loves the world causes loss to the Hereafter, and whoever loves the Hereafter causes loss to the world. So, one chooses that which will remain over that which will not remain."

Zayd bin Arqam¹²⁰⁵ (R) says: "I was in the company of Abu Bakr and water was brought to him mixed with sweet honey. When he brought it to his mouth, he stood up and wept copiously so that all were weeping. He became silent. Then he began to weep again, so much so that no one had the courage to ask him about it. When he wiped his eyes, he was asked: 'What happened, O Successor of the Messenger of God?' He answered: 'One day I was sitting with the Messenger (S). I saw that he was shooing something away from himself with his hand, but I could not see anything. I said: "O Messenger of God, what is it?" He said: "It is the world which always displays itself to me. I drove it away; it returned and said: 'Thou hast leaped out of my hand, but those who come after thee will not leap away.'" Now, I feared that it had taken me.'"

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High has not created anything more hostile to Himself than the world and, having created it, He has not looked at it." And he said: "The world is the home of the homeless and it is the property of those without property. The person who accumulates it is foolish. The person who hates (another) for its sake is unwise. The person who envies (another) because of it is without religious knowledge. The person who seeks it is without certainty." And he said: "Whoever rises in the morning and the greater part of his aspiration is for the world is not a man of God Most High. Four traits accompany him: grief that will never cease; labor from which he shall never be free; poverty, for he will never achieve wealth;¹²⁰⁶ and a hope that will never be fulfilled."

Abu Hurayrah (R) said: "One day the Messenger (S) said: 'Dost thou not desire that I display to thee the whole world?' And he took my hand and placed it on a dunghill in which there were the bones of humans, sheep, and beasts of burden, and filthy rags and human filth. He said: 'O Aba Hurayrah! These skulls were full of avarice and greed, as are your heads. Today they have become skinless bones and they will soon be dust. This filth has been the different kinds of food that they secured with tremendous effort and which they have (now) thrown here. Everyone flees them (now). These rags were their luxurious garments that are now blown about by the wind. These bones are of their steeds upon which they used to sit and travel about the world. This is the entire

¹²⁰⁵ Zayd bin Arqam: a Companion of the Prophet. He died AH68/687-8CE.

¹²⁰⁶ That is, he will never achieve as much wealth as he desires.

world. Tell whoever wants to weep for the world to do so, for it is the place for that.' Then all who were present burst into tears."

And the Messenger (S) said: "As soon as the world was created it was suspended between the sky and the earth, for God Most High did not look at it. At the Resurrection, the world will say: 'O Lord God, give me to the least of Thy servants!' He will say: 'Silence, O worthless one! It did not please Me that that thou belong to anyone in that world. Should it please Me today?'" And he said: "Some will be coming on the Day of Resurrection with deeds in the amount of the mountains of Tihamah.¹²⁰⁷ All will be sent to hell." They asked: "O Messenger of God, will they include those who performed the obligatory prayers?" He replied. "They pray, they fast, they remain awake at night in supplication, but when something appears from the world, they pounce upon it."

One day, the Messenger (S) came out and said to the Companions: "Who amongst you does not wish to be blind or to be blinded by God Most High? Know that whoever takes delight in the world and has great hopes from it, God Most High is able to blind his soul. Whoever becomes an ascetic in the world and has small hopes, God Most High gives him knowledge without his learning it and shows him the way, without the intervention of a guide."

One day, the Messenger (S) came out. Abu 'Ubaydah Jarrah had sent some goods from Bahrain and the Helpers had heard about it. They crowded the early morning obligatory prayer. When they had returned the greetings (at the conclusion of the prayer), all rose before him. The Messenger (S) smiled: "Ye mean ye have heard about the arrival of the goods?" They answered: "Yes." He said: "Let it be good news for you, for things will be done that will please you. I do not fear poverty for you; I fear that (the riches of) the world will be poured upon you, as they were poured upon those who came before you. Then, ye shall compete with one another, as they did, and ye shall be destroyed, as they were." And he said: "Do not occupy your souls with remembrance of the world." He prohibited remembrance of the world, not to mention loving and seeking it.

Anas (R) says: "The Messenger (S) had a camel which was called 'Adbā.¹²⁰⁸ It ran better than any of the other camels. One day a

¹²⁰⁷ Tihāmah is a name for Makkah and the northern Hijaz, a region of mountains and plains, especially the plain which slopes down from the western slopes of the mountains of Hijaz to the Red Sea.

¹²⁰⁸ 'Adbā: corrected from *Ghadbā* in both HK and AA. In a note, HK states that the name means a female camel with cut ears. The form of the name is certainly feminine, but the corresponding passage in the Arabic of *The Revival* records it as 'Adbā. The entry 'Adbā' in *Muḥit* confirms HK's definition, referring to the slit ears (but not his reading of the name), and explicitly cites it as the name of the Prophet's camel. It also states that ears of the Prophet's camel were not slit. Rather, she was so named because of her noble lineage. The difference between 'Adbā and *Ghadbā* is a single dot over the first letter.

desert Arab brought a camel and raced it (against 'Adba). The desert Arab's camel won and the Muslims were grieved. The Messenger (S) said: "The truth by God Most High is that nothing exalts itself in the world that is not humbled." And he said: "Therefore, the world turns to you and devours your religion, as fire devours kindling wood."

Jesus (A) said: "Do not take the world as a lord so that the world does not take you as slaves. Lay away treasure so that ye not fear and store it where it will not be lost, for the treasure of the world is not safe from blight, while the treasure ye store for God Most High is secure." And he said: "The world and the Hereafter are co-wives of each other so that when thou pleasest one the other is displeased." And he said: "O my disciples! I have thrown down the world into the dust before you. Do not take it up again; for one of the pollutions of the world is that there is no sin against God Most High except in it. One of its uncleannesses is that a person cannot reach the Hereafter except by renouncing it. Pass outside of the world and abandon it and engage not in its development. Know that the source of all error is the love of the world. There are many passions the fruit of which are many lengthy sorrows." And he (A) said: "Just as water and fire cannot exist in one place together, love for the world and love for the Hereafter cannot be joined in one soul." Jesus (A) was asked: "What would happen if thou madest a garment for thyself?" He replied: "The rags of others are sufficient for us."

One day, he was caught by rain, thunder, and lightning. He fled looking for a place (of shelter). He saw a tent and went there. He saw a woman there and fled away. He saw a cave and entered it. He saw a lion and fled from that place. He said: "O Lord God! There is a resting place for all that Thou hast created save for me!" A revelation came to him: "Thine abode is My mercy—that is, heaven—and in heaven I shall make a hundred bright-eyed ones thy mates. I have created all with the Hand of My gentleness. And thy wedding shall be four thousand years, every day of which will (last as long as a) lifetime in the world. I shall command a herald to cry: 'Where are ye, ascetics of the world? All come to the wedding of Jesus the ascetic!' And all will come."

Once, Jesus was passing through a city with his disciples. He saw that all of the people of that place were dead. He said: "O people! They have died in the anger of God Most High; if not they would have been buried." They said: "We desire to know for what reason they have died." That night, Jesus (A) ascended a height and cried: "O people of this city!" Someone answered: "*At thy service, O Spirit of God!*" (Jesus) said: "What is your story?" (The other) answered: "At night we were in good health, but in the morning we were in the lowest level of hell." (Jesus) asked: "Why?" He said: "Because we loved the world and obeyed sinners." (Jesus) asked: "In what manner did ye love the world?" He answered: "As an infant loves his mother. When it came to us, we would rejoice; when it went away, we would grieve." (Jesus) said: "Why

did the others not answer (me)?" He said: "Each of them has a fiery bit in his mouth." (Jesus) asked: "Then how was it that thou answered?" He replied: "I was among them, but I was not of them. When the punishment came, I too was seized among them. Now, I am at the edge of hell. I do not know whether I shall be saved or fall into hell." Jesus (A) said: "O disciples! Barley bread, coarse salt, garments of sackcloth, and sleeping on trash heaps are much better in comparison with the welfare of the world and the Hereafter." And he said: "Make do with a little of the world in exchange for the health and safety of religion as others have made do with a little religion in exchange for worldly health and safety." And he said: "O ye people who seek the world for its rewards, if ye refrain from the world, the reward will be much greater!"

One day, Solomon the son of David was traveling with a great retinue. The birds of the air, fairies, and demons were attending him. They passed by one of the devout worshippers of the Children of Israel. He said: "O son of David, God Most High has bestowed upon thee a great kingdom." (Solomon) replied: "One glorification on the scroll of a believer is better than all that has been given to the son of David, for the glorification shall endure, but the kingdom shall not endure."

It is related in the Traditions: "When Adam (A) was eating wheat, he felt the need to move his bowels. He looked for a place in Paradise for this purpose. God Most High sent an angel to him who said: "What art thou seeking?" (Adam) replied: "I want a place to lay down that which is in my belly." This burden was not inherent in any of the foods of heaven except in wheat. (The angel) said: "Tell me where thou wouldst put it down! On the Throne, or on the Pedestal, or in a rivers of Paradise, or under the trees? Go to the world, for that is the place for such filth!"

It is related in the Traditions: "Gabriel said to Noah: 'How hast thou found the world during thy long life?' (Noah) answered: 'It is like a house with two doors. I enter through one door and leave through the other.'"

Jesus (A) was asked: "Teach us something so that God Most High will love us for that." He said: "Hold the world to be an enemy so that God Most High will love you."

As for the Non-Prophetic Traditions,¹²⁰⁹ Ali bin Abi Talib, may God ennoble his visage, says: "Everyone who has done six things has not

¹²⁰⁹ *Āthār*: A classification of Traditions with respect to the relaters. "Among the relaters of traditions of the Prophet (*muḥaddithān*) the term *athar* (pl. *āthār*) applies to both the *exalted* tradition (*ḥadīth-i marfūʿ*)—a tradition, the chain of narrators of which goes back to one of the Companions—and the *intersected* tradition (*ḥadīth-i maqtūʿ*)—a tradition which goes back to one of the Followers (the generation following the Companions) or inferior to one of the Followers." (Note: HK; See also Hughes:

omitted anything in the search for Paradise and the flight from hell: [first], whoever has recognized God Most High and has obeyed Him; [second], (whoever) has recognized Satan and has opposed him; [third], (whoever) has recognized the right and put his hand to that; [fourth], (whoever) has recognized wrong and restrained his hand from that; [fifth], (whoever) has recognized the world and discarded it; and [sixth], (whoever) has recognized the Hereafter and been steadfast in the search for it."

A sage says: "What has been given to thee of the world has been in the possession of someone before thee and will belong to someone else after thee—and thou givest thy heart to that? Thy portion of the world is nothing more than a breakfast and a dinner; do not destroy thyself for that amount. Fast from world completely so as to obtain the Hereafter, for the stock-in-trade of the world is lust and its profit is the lowest level of hell!"

Some one said to Abu Hazim (R): "I love the world. What shall I do so that this love for the world may depart from my soul?" He answered: "Take from the lawful whatever thou obtainest from the world and put it (back) in its own place so that thy love for it not cause thee loss." (Abu Hazim) said that with the truth of that which he knew, for if one did that, the world would itself become irksome and change in one's heart into something unpleasant.

Yahya bin Mu'adh (R) says: "The world is the shop of Satan. Steal nothing from his shop and do not take anything, for then he will certainly attach himself to thee." Fudayl says: "If the world were of gold and transitory and the Hereafter of clay and eternal, it be incumbent upon the intelligent to prefer the lasting clay over the transitory gold. So, how will it be that anyone would choose the transitory clay [of the world] over the everlasting gold [of the Hereafter]?"¹²¹⁰ And Abu Hazim (R) says: "Be wary of the world, for I have heard that whoever gives importance to the world will be brought in at the Resurrection and a herald will cry over him: 'He is that one who gave importance to that thing which God Most High despised.'" Ibn Mas'ud says: "Whoever is in the world is a guest and all that he has is borrowed. There is no conclusion for the guest except departure and returning the borrowed goods."

Luqman said to his son: "Son! Sell the world for the Hereafter so that thou may profit from both of them. Do not sell the Hereafter for the

Dictionary of Islam, *Tradition*.) Ghazzali also uses it to describe traditions not about prophets and messengers of God.

¹²¹⁰ The "transitory clay" is an allusion to the world and the "eternal gold" an allusion to the hereafter.

world, for thou wilt lose both.” Abu Imamah Bahili¹²¹¹ (R) says: “When the Messenger (S) was sent with the Message, the army of Iblis came to him: ‘Such-and-such a messenger has been sent. Now what shall we do?’ (Iblis) replied: ‘Do they love the world?’ They said: ‘They do.’ He said: ‘Then, since they love the world, do not worry, even if they do not worship idols. For with the love of the world, I shall lead them so that whatever they accept, they will accept unjustly, and whatever they give, they will give unjustly, and whatever they keep, they will keep unjustly. Evil, all of it, is pursuant to these three acts.’”

Fudayl Iyad (R) says: “If all the world is given to me, lawful and without reckoning (in the Hereafter), I would disdain it, just as ye disdain carrion.” Abu ‘Ubaydah Jarrah (R) was the commander of Syria. When ‘Umar arrived there, he went to his residence and saw nothing there but a sword, a shield, a copy of the Quran, and a camel saddle. (‘Umar) said: “Why hast thou not acquired any household equipment?” (‘Ubaydah) replied: “This is sufficient for that place we are going.” He meant the grave. Hasan Basri (R) wrote a letter to ‘Umar (bin) ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, but he wrote no more than this: “Assume that the day has come on which the last person will die for whom death has been ordained.”¹²¹² (‘Umar) wrote back in reply: “Assume that a day has come on which the world itself has never existed and the Hereafter has always existed.”

In the non-prophetic Traditions it is related: “How strange it is, when a person knows that death is certain, how he can laugh! How strange it is, when a person sees how unstable the world is for everyone, how he can give his heart to it! How strange it is, when a person knows that God has ordained (everything), how he can busy his soul with his sustenance!” Dawud Ta’i (R) said: “Every day a person is continually tossing repentance and acts of worship behind him. Tell the truth, is he doing forced labor, or will the benefit be for someone else?”

Abu Hazim (R) said: “There is nothing in the world with which thou rejoicest that beneath it is not something that causes thee sorrow. As for unalloyed joy, it has not been created.” Hasan Basri used to say: “No one departs the world without three regrets seizing him by the throat at the moment of death: (regret) for that which he has accumulated and not enjoyed to satiety, (regret) for that for which he had had hopes that were unrealized, and (regret) for the provisions for the Hereafter that he did not lay up as he should have done.”

¹²¹¹ Abū Imāmah Bāhili: a Companion of the Prophet. He died in either AH81/700CE or AH86/705CE. In *Tarjamah-yi Risalah-yi Qushayriyah*, a Tradition of his is quoted on his authority that the Prophet said: “Whoever looks at a woman and averts his eyes at the first glance is credited by God Most High with an act of worship, and he finds the sweetness of that in his soul.”

¹²¹² That is, the end of the world.

Muhammad bin al-Munkadir (R) says: "If a person spends his entire life fasting by day and offering formal prayers by night, and he fulfills the duties of the Greater Pilgrimage and military service (in defence of Islam), but on the Day of Resurrection, it is said to him: 'This is the one who held the world, which God Most High despised, great,' what will be his condition? Who amongst us is not like that? Indeed, we have many sins, but we are deficient in our religious obligations."

It has been said: "The world is desolate mansion, but more desolate than that is the soul of the person who is engaged in the quest for it. Heaven is an eternal mansion, and more eternal than that is the soul of the person who is engaged in the quest for it." Ibrahim Adham (R) said to someone: "Dost thou prefer a dirham in a dream or a dinar when awake?" He answered: "A dinar when awake." (Ibrahim) said: "Thou liest, for the world is a dream and the Hereafter is wakefulness and thou dost prefer that which is in the world."

Yahya Mu'adh (R) says: "Intelligent is that person who does three things: he abandons the world before the world abandons him; he makes ready his grave before he goes to his grave; and he pleases God Most High before he reaches His Bosom." And he said: "The misfortune of the world is at that degree at which hopes for it distract one from God Most High. When it is obtained, what has one gained?" Bakr bin 'Abdullah¹²¹³ (R) says: "Whoever makes himself self-sufficient of the world from the world is like the person who desires to extinguish a fire and throws dry wood on it."

'Ali [bin Abi Talib (R) said: "The world is six things: that which is eaten, that which is drunk, that which is worn, that which is smelled, that which is sat upon, and that which is sought in marriage. The noblest¹²¹⁴ of that which is eaten is honey, and that is the spittle of an insect. The noblest of that which is drunk is water, and all the world and its inhabitants are equal in that. The noblest of that which is worn is silk, and that is spun by a worm. The noblest of that which is smelled is musk, and that is the blood of a deer. The noblest of that which is sat upon is a horse, and all men kill while sitting upon it. And the greatest of carnal passions is that for women, and that is obtained by the meeting of one instrument of urination with another instrument of urination. A woman adorns the most beautiful parts of herself, while you seek the ugliness part of her."

'Umar bin 'Abdullah (R) said: "O people! Ye have been created for a task in which, if ye do not have faith, ye are unbelievers. If ye believe in it, but are slack, ye are fools. For, ye have been created to be eternal, but will be taken from residence to residence."

¹²¹³ Bakr bin 'Abdullah: Bakr bin 'Abdullah al-Mazani, see Note 1104.

¹²¹⁴ "noblest" (*sharīf-tarīn*): AA has "sweetest" (*shīrīn-tarīn*).

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF THE BASENESS OF THE WORLD

Know that we have discussed this subject in the Topic *The Spiritual Knowledge of This World*.¹²¹⁵ In this place this much must be learned, that the Messenger (S) has said: "The world is accursed by all that is in it, except that part of it which is accordance with God Most High. Consequently, one must know that which is for God Most High, as it is not accursed. That which is outside of this is accursed and the love for it is the beginning of all sins. Therefore, know that

ALL THAT THERE IS IN THE WORLD IS OF THREE KINDS:

THE FIRST (KIND) is that the exterior and interior of that which is of the world and cannot be for the sake of God. That is, all are sins, for the intention and objective is not for God Most High. Enjoying the permitted¹²¹⁶ comforts of life is included, for they are merely for the world and are the seeds of hubris and heedlessness and the leaven of all sins.

THE SECOND KIND is that which is apparently for God, but it is possible that, by intention, it is part of the world. These are three: thought, remembrance (of God), and opposition to the carnal appetite. These three, if they are the sake of the Hereafter and the love of God Most high, even though they concern the world, are for God Most High. If the motive for thought is seeking knowledge in order to obtain acceptance and rank, if the motive for the remembrance is that people will consider him pious, and if the motive for self-restraint from the world is that he be considered an ascetic, they are worldly, censurable, and accursed, even though in appearance they appear to be for the sake of God.

THE THIRD KIND is that it appears to be for one's self-pleasure, but it may become possible that the aim and intention be for God and not for the world, such as eating food when the object is strength for worship, or marrying when the object is producing children, or going after some small wealth in order to have the leisure to worship and to be self-sufficient from others.

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever seeks the world for swagger and self-glorification will see God wrathful against him. But, if he seeks it in order to be independent of others, he will come on the Day of Resurrection with a face shining like the full moon." Therefore, the world is that in which there is the immediate pleasure of the self for which there is no need in the Hereafter. Everything that one needs for the Hereafter, since it is for the Hereafter, is not of the world, just as the

¹²¹⁵ The Third Topic of the Prolegomena. This refers to the material in the second chapter entitled: *The True Nature, Bane, and Purpose of the World*.

¹²¹⁶ "permitted" (*mubāḥāt*): neither rewarded nor punished in Islamic law.

fodder for the beasts of burden on the road for the Pilgrimage is a part of the provisions of Pilgrimage.

God Most High has called whatever is worldly "desire": (*But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord) and forbade his desire; lo! the Garden will be his refuge.* (Q. 79:40-41) In another place, He has collected five things together and has said: (*Know that) the life of this world is play, sport, adornment, self-glorification among you, and rivalry for wealth and children.* (Q. 57:20) He said that the world is all in five things: play, pleasure, carnal passions, self-adornment, and rivalry in property and offspring. These things are tied to these five, collected in one verse, when He said: *Beautified for mankind is the love of the pleasures that come from women and children and stored-up heaps of gold and silver and branded horses and cattle and tillage.* (Q. 3:14) He said that in the hearts of people the love for these seven has been embellished: women, children, gold and silver, horses, landed property, and cattle. *That is the comfort of the life of the world!* (Q. 3:14) This is the happiness of people in the world.

Therefore, know that whatever of all of this is for the Hereafter is also of the Hereafter, and enjoyment and an excess of sustenance is not for the Hereafter. Indeed, the world is (divided) into three degrees: the amount absolutely necessary for food, clothing, and shelter; beyond that, the amount for the satisfaction (of needs); and beyond that, the amount for adornment and an increase of luxury, for which there is no end. Whoever contents himself with the necessary is saved. Whoever has reached the level of luxury has fallen into a chasm that has no bottom. Whoever contents himself according to his satisfaction is not free of danger, for satisfaction has two aspects: one is that which is closer to necessity, and the other, which is closer to enjoyment. Between these two, there is a degree that can be ascertained through reflection and effort. It may be that an excess that is not required be considered a requirement (for satisfaction) and one may be in danger of being called to account (at the Resurrection). The saints and the resolute contented themselves with the amount absolutely necessary.

The imam and model to be followed in this was Uways Qarani (R) who so straitened the affairs of the world upon himself that people used to think he was mad. A year or two years would pass when they did not see his face. He would come out at the call to obligatory prayer and return after the evening obligatory prayer. His food was date stones that he picked up from the path. If he got hold of some bad dates to eat, he would give the stones in charity. If not, he would buy a few dates to break his fast. His clothing was a tattered cloak that he had picked out of the trash and washed. Children used to throw stones at him as though he were mad and he would say: "Throw small stones so that they do not break my leg and keep me from purification and obligatory prayer." It was for this that the Messenger (S) never saw him without praising him

much and he commended him to 'Umar Khattab (R). When 'Umar found the people of Iraq assembled, he ascended the pulpit and said: "O people, whoever is Iraqi, sit down!" All sat down, one remained. ('Umar) said: "Are you from the Qarani?" He answered: "Yes." ('Umar) asked: "Do you know Uways Qarani?" He said: "I know him. He is more humble than that thou shouldst speak of him. Among our people, there is no one more foolish, madder, poorer, or viler than he." When 'Umar heard this, he wept and said: "I am continually seeking him because I heard from the Messenger (S) say: 'People in the number of the Rabi'ah and Mudar are going to enter heaven because of his intercession.'" These two tribes were so numerous that their number was not known.

Then, Harim Hayyan¹²¹⁷ said: "When I heard that from 'Umar, I went to Kufah and searched for (Uways) until I found him on the banks of the Euphrates River. He was performing the obligatory (lesser) purification and washing his clothes. I recognized him from the descriptions of him that had been made. I greeted him and he replied. He stared at me. I wanted to take his hand, but he did not give it to me. I said: *'May God have mercy upon thee, O Uways, and forgive thee. How art thou?'* I began to weep out of my love for him and the pity that I felt for the weakness of his condition. He wept too and said: *'May God grant thee life, O Harim bin Hayyan!'* How art thou, my brother, and what road brought thee to me?" I said: 'How dost thou know my name and the name of my father, and how didst thou recognize me, whom thou hast never seen?' He said: *'The All-Knowing and All-Aware informed me. He from Whom no knowledge or news is hidden informed me. My soul recognized thy soul. There is an awareness of the souls of the believers for one another. They are acquainted with each other, even if they have not seen one another.'* I said: 'Relate a Tradition of the Messenger (S) to me that may be a reminder¹²¹⁸ for me.' He said: 'May my body and my soul be the Messenger's sacrifice! I did not see him myself, but I have heard the Traditions about him from others. I do not want that the way of relating Traditions be opened to myself, and I do not want to be a relater of Traditions, an issuer of decisions, or a remembrancer, for I have my own task and I do not attend to that.' I said: 'Recite a verse of the Quran to me so that I may hear it from thee. Offer a supplication for me and advise me so that I may act by that, for I love thee very much for the sake of God Most High.'

"Then he took my hand on the banks of the Euphrates and said: *'I seek refuge with God from the accursed Satan,'* and he wept. Then he said: 'My God speaks thus—and it is His most truthful and correct utterance—He says: *I did not create the jinn and mankind save for that*

¹²¹⁷ Harim Hayyān: Harim bin Hayyan, see Note 897.

¹²¹⁸ "a reminder" (*yādgār*): something to remember one by; a souvenir.

they worship *Me*, (Q. 51:56) and He says: *I did not create the heavens and the earth and that which is between them in play. I did not create them save with truth, but most of them do not know.*' (Q. 44:38-39) And he recited until: *Lo! He is the Mighty, the Merciful.* (Q. 44:42)¹²¹⁹ Then, he uttered a cry and I said: 'Has he fainted?' Then he said: 'O son of Hayyan, thy father Hayyan died and thy death is also near. Wilt thou go to heaven or hell? Thy father Adam died and thy mother Eve died. Noah died. Abraham, the Friend of God, died. Moses, the Word of God, died. David, the Regent of God, died. And Muhammad, the Beloved and Messenger of God, died, *may God bless them all!* Abu Bakr, his successor, died and 'Umar, my brother, died. O 'Umar, O 'Umar!' I said: '*May God have mercy upon you, Umar is not dead.*' He said: 'God Most High has informed me of his death.' After saying this, he said: 'I and thou are also among the dead.' Then, he blessed the Messenger (S) and uttered a light supplication.

"Then he said: 'My parting counsel is that thou settest the Book of God Most High and the way of the righteous before thee and do not forget to remember death for an hour. When thou returnest to thine own people, admonish them and do not withhold counsel from the people of God, do not withhold one step consistent with the Practice (of the Prophet) and the congregation of (his) nation, for in that event thou wilt become impious and with that thou wilt fall into hell.' Then he offered a few supplications and said: 'When thou hast gone, O Harim bin Hayyan, thou shalt not see me again, nor will I thee. Remember me in thy supplications for I too shall remember thee in mine. Thou goest from this side so that I may go from the other side.' I wanted to accompany him for a while, but he would not permit it and he brought me to tears. As it happened, I followed him with my eyes until he had entered one of the lanes of Kufah and I never heard any news of him again after that."

So, the way of life of those persons who have recognized the bane of the world was thus and that is the way of the prophets and the saints, and they are the lords of the sacred.¹²²⁰ If thou dost not achieve that degree, it cannot be less than that thou content yourself with the amount of need. Thou shouldst not take up the way of enjoyment even once, lest thou fall into danger. Let this much suffice about the judgment of the world; we have discussed the rest in the Prolegomena.

¹²¹⁹ The Quranic text omitted is: *Surely the Day of Decision shall be their appointed time, all together, the day a friend shall not avail a friend in anything, nor can they be helped, save him on whom God hath mercy. Lo! He is the Mighty, the Merciful.* (Q. 44:40-42)

¹²²⁰ "the lords of the sacred" (*haram*): Thus the HK text. AA has "the lords of resolution" (*hazm*). The difference is a single dot over the middle letter: *r* does not have a dot while *z* does.

CHAPTER SIX: THE TREATMENT OF MISERLINESS AND GREED IN THE ACCUMULATION OF POSSESSIONS

Know that the branches of the world are many and one of its branches is wealth and enjoyment and another is rank and retinue, and it has other branches as well. However, the trial of wealth¹²²¹ is immense. A greater trial is that which God Most High call has called "the Ascent"¹²²² when He said: *But he hath not completed the Ascent—Ah, what will convey unto thee what the Ascent is?—(It is) to free a slave and to feed in the day of hunger.* (Q. 90:11-14) There is no greater Ascent than this (wealth) and there is no avoiding it, for though it is the cause of the easing of appetite, it is also provision for the Hereafter. One cannot do without food, clothing, and shelter; and these are the property which may be obtained with wealth. Consequently, there is no enduring not obtaining it and there is no safety in obtaining it. If it is absent, there is poverty from which there arises the fear of unbelief. If it is present, there is wealth from which there is the fear of hubris.

There are two states of poverty: one is covetousness and the other is contentment—and the latter is praiseworthy. There are two states for the covetous: one is greed with respect to people and the other is to earn with one's own hand—and the latter is praiseworthy. There are two states for the wealthy: one is miserliness and retention, the other is giving and generosity. There are two states for the giver: one is extravagance and the other is economy. Of these two states, one is censured and the other mixed. Learning all of these is important. In summary, wealth is not devoid of benefits, nor of detriments. It is a religious obligation to know both in order to guard against the detriments (of wealth) and (yet) to pursue a sufficient amount of it.

DISCLOSING THE REPUGNANCE OF THE LOVE FOR WEALTH

God Most High says: *O ye who believe! Let not your wealth nor your children distract you from the remembrance of God. Those who are thus, indeed, they are the losers.* (Q. 63:9) Whoever neglects the remembrance of God, *may He be honored and glorified*, for his wealth and children is amongst the lost and the losers.

The Messenger (S) said: "The love of wealth and rank causes hypocrisy to grow in the soul as water causes leeks to grow." And he (S)

¹²²¹ "wealth" (*māl*): *māl* refers to money, property, and virtually all other kinds of tangible wealth.

¹²²² The Ascent (*al-ʿAqabah*): The Arabic word indicates a steep and difficult track or incline; a mountain pass; an obstacle or difficulty.

said: "Two hungry wolves do not cause the destruction in a flock of sheep as much as the love for rank and wealth does in the Muslim man." He was asked: "O Messenger of God, who are the worst of peoples?" He replied: "The rich." And he said: "A people will appear after me who will eat varieties of delicious foods and will possess multi-colored clothes and beautiful wives and precious horses. Their bellies will not be satisfied with small amounts of food, nor will they be content with a lot. All of their ambition will be for this world and they will hold the world as their god. Whatever they do will be for the world. It is my determination, I who am Muhammad, that whoever finds them from among the children of your children must not greet them with "peace." He should not visit their sick, he should not follow their biers, nor should he respect their leaders. Whoever does these things is assisting them in the destruction of Islam."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Leave the world to the worldly. Whoever takes anything from it in excess of his need—it is his own perdition that he takes without knowing it." And he said: "A person continually says: 'My wealth and *my* wealth.' Nothing is thine of thy property except that which thou eatest and voidest, or wearest and wearest out, or givest charitably and layest up for eternity." Someone asked the Messenger (S): "What is the reason that I have no provision for death?" (The Messenger) said: "Dost thou have possessions?" (The man) replied: "I do." (The Messenger) said: "Send them on ahead of thee." That is, give them in charity, for the people's souls are joined to their possessions. "If one leaves his possessions in their place, they remain (in the world) and if one sends them on before (by giving them away in charity), they will go (to the next world)." And he said: "A person has three kinds of friends: one is he who is faithful unto death, another is (with him) to the graveside, and another is his friend unto the Resurrection. That which is faithful unto death is wealth, those which goes with him to the graveside are family and kinfolk, and those which are with him at the Resurrection are his deeds." And he said: "When a person dies, people ask: 'What did he leave behind?' The angels ask: 'What did he send before?'" And he said: "Do not built estates, for then ye will hold the world as a friend."

The disciples asked Jesus: "What is the reason that thou canst walk upon water and we cannot?" He replied: "How do ye value gold and silver in your hearts?" They said: "They are good." (Jesus) said: "They are the same as earth to me."

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: Someone was troubling Abu Darda. (Abu Darda) said: "O Lord God, lavish a sound body, a long life, and much wealth upon him!" This was the worse supplication that he knew, for whomever these were given would certainly ignore the Hereafter out of heedlessness and vanity and he would be destroyed. 'Ali (R) placed a dirham on the palm of his hand and said (to it): "Thou art

that which, if thou dost not leave my hand, has no profit for me." Hasan Basri (R) says: "By God, God Most High has not despised or held in contempt the person who does not esteem gold and silver."

In the Non-Prophetic Traditions, it is related that when dirhams and dinars were first struck, they were taken to Iblis. He took them and rubbed his eyes with them and kissed them repeatedly. He said: "Whoever loves thee will truly be my slave!" Yahya Mu'adh (R) says: "Dirhams and dinars are scorpions. Do not touch them if thou hast not learned the incantation for them. If thou hast not, their poison will destroy thee." He was asked: "What is their incantation?" He said: "It is that (thy) income be lawful and (thy) expenditures be just."

Maslamah bin 'Abd al-Malik¹²²³ went to 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz at the time of ('Umar's) death. He said: "O Commander of the Believers, thou hast done what no one has done. Thou hast thirteen children and hast not left them any dirhams or dinars." ('Umar) said: "Help me to sit up." (Maslamah) did so, and ('Umar) said: "I have not given any of their property to another and I have not given the property of others to them. My children are either worthy and obedient or unworthy. Those who are worthy and obedient to God, God will suffice for them (for) *He protects the righteous*. (Q. 7:196) As for those who are unworthy, I do not fear for whatever becomes of them."

Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurazi¹²²⁴ (R) acquired a lot of wealth. It was said: "Leave it for thy children." He said: "No, I shall lay this up with God Most High for myself and I will leave God Most High for my children so that He will keep them well." Yahya bin Mu'adh said: "There are two hardships for the rich at the time of death which others will not have: that their wealth is taken away from them, and that they will seized and questioned (about it)." [*And we seek refuge with God from that.*]

EXCURSUS: [THE WAY FOR WEALTH'S BEING PRAISEWORTHY]

Know that however much wealth is criticized for some reasons, it also has a praiseworthy aspect: for, in it there are both evil and good. It is for this that God Most High called it a blessing in the Quran, saying: *If he leave wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives in kindness; (this is) a duty for the god-fearing*. (Q. 2:180) The Messenger (S) said: "Honorable wealth is a good thing for an honorable man."

¹²²³ Maslamah bin 'Abd al-Malik: 'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz's (Note 784) cousin. He fought against the Byzantines during the short reign of his brother, Sulayman (bin) 'Abd al-Malik (see Note 814). Another of his brothers who became caliph, Yazid II (rgd. AH101-105/720-724CE), appointed him governor of "the Two Iraqs" (modern Iraq and western Iran: *al-'Irāqayn*), and also Armenia. He died in Syria AH120/737CE.

¹²²⁴ Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurazi: an authority on Traditions, he died AH117/735CE.

And the Messenger (S) said: "It is to be feared that poverty will lead to unbelief." The reason for that is that when a person is helpless and in need of a loaf of bread, he looks about and is anguished. He sees his children and family suffering while there are many comforts in the world. Satan says to him: "What kind of justice is this? What kind of equity is this that thou seest from God Most High? What an unfair division He has made, giving so much to the sinners and oppressors who do not know what they have and what they do, while the wretched are perishing from hunger and are not given a dirham! If He does not know thy need, there is a deficiency in His knowledge. If He knows and does nothing, there is a deficiency in His power. If He knows and is able and does not give, then there is a deficiency in His mercy. If the reason He does not give anything is to give a spiritual reward in the Hereafter, He could give a spiritual reward without sorrow and hunger. Why does He not give it? If He cannot give it, His power is not absolute. With all of this, it is difficult to believe that He is Merciful, Magnanimous, and Generous when He keeps the whole world in suffering while His treasures are filled with blessings which He does not give."

So Satan finds the way of temptation and proposes the problem of predestination, the mystery of which is hidden from everyone, so that (the person's) anger may overwhelm him and he begin to abuse destiny and fortune and say: "Destiny has become weak and fortune overturned. Blessings are all given to the undeserving and the ignoble." If it is said to him: "This destiny and fortune is subject to God Most High" and if he says: "That is not so," he becomes an unbeliever. If he says: "That is so," then he may attribute persecution to God. That, too, is unbelief. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "*Do not curse destiny, for God, He is destiny.*" Do not curse destiny, for destiny is God Most High. That is: that which ye know as the place of the transaction of affairs, that which you called destiny, *that is God Most High!*

Consequently, the odor of unbelief comes from poverty, except with respect to a person whose faith is so overpowering that he is content with poverty from God Most High and who knows that his welfare lies in that he be poor. Since most do not have this character, it is preferred that one have adequate means. For this reason, from one point of view, wealth is praiseworthy.

Another aspect is that while the objective of every astute person is the happiness of the Hereafter, achieving that is not possible except with three kinds of blessings: one is in oneself, such as knowledge and good character; another is in the body and that is soundness and health; and one is external to the body and that is an adequate sustenance from the world. The meanest of those which are external to the body is wealth. And the meanest is gold and silver in which there is no (intrinsic) benefit. However, (gold and silver) are for bread and clothing, and bread and clothing are for the body, and the body is the porter of the (five) senses.

and the senses are the net of the intellect, and the purpose of the intellect is (to serve) as a lamp and a light for the soul so that it may discern the Divine Presence and obtain knowledge. The knowledge of God Most High is the seed of happiness. So, at the end of all is God Most High. He is the beginning and He is the end, and this path, all of it, is to Him. Whoever understands this takes from the world that amount of wealth he needs on his way in this enterprise; he regards the rest as a fatal poison. His wealth is the worthy wealth of the worthy man, and it is praiseworthy.

For this the Messenger (S) said: "O Lord, make the food of the people of Muhammad an amount adequate for sustenance." He knew that whatever is in excess of that sustenance would be destructive and whatever was less than enough would lead to unbelief, and this too is a cause of destruction.

Hence, anyone who understands this will never love wealth. Whoever is in search of something for another goal loves that goal, not that thing. So, whoever loves wealth for itself is inverted and reversed¹²²⁵ and has not learned its true nature. For this the Messenger (S) said: "*The slave of the dinar is wretched, the slave of the dirham is wretched.*" The heads of the slave of the dinar and the slave of the dirham are hung with shame; for they¹²²⁶ become the lords of whoever cares about such things. Abraham (A) said about this: "*Preserve me and my sons from worshipping idols.*" (Q. 14:35) He prayed that he and his sons would be preserved from idol-worship. It was said that the leaders sought gold and silver from the idol, for (gold and silver) are the idols to which most of mankind turn. What office of the messengers is greater than that they fear idol-worship? *Peace!*

DISCLOSING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF WEALTH BY EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

Know that wealth is like a serpent; in it there are both poison and medicine. So long as we do not separate the poison from the medicine, its mystery and its knowledge cannot be made manifest completely. So, let us examine (wealth's) benefits and detriments in detail, one by one.

As for the BENEFITS OF WEALTH, there are two categories: one is worldly, the other religious. The first category is worldly: There is no need to discuss these for everyone recognizes them.

The second category is religious; these are of three kinds:

¹²²⁵ "inverted and reversed": he has things backwards.

¹²²⁶ "they": the dinar and the dirham.

THE FIRST KIND is that which thou spendest upon thyself for worship or for the provisions of worship. As for acts of worship such as the Greater Pilgrimage and warfare in defense of the faith, spending money on oneself is subsumed in the act of worship itself. As for that which is for the provisions for the act of worship, such as bread, clothing, and the sustenance—from them, the strength for all acts of worship and the freedom for all acts of worship are obtained. Everything without which worship cannot be achieved is itself of the essence of worship. Whoever does not have that in a sufficient amount is engaged every day body and soul in the search for the sustenance and is deprived of worship, the core of which is remembrance and meditation. Therefore, when there is (wealth) in an amount sufficient for worship, it is of the essence of worship and of the religious benefits. It is not considered worldly. This revolves about the intention and the deliberation of the soul as to what the direction of prayer of the soul will be. If the direction of prayer of the soul is toward tranquillity and sowing the way of the Hereafter, a sufficient amount is both the provision for the way and is also of the way.

Shaykh Abu al-Qasim Gurgani¹²²⁷ (R) had a lawful property from which he obtained an amount that sufficed for him. One day, the (harvest) grain of the property was brought (to him). I heard from Khwajah Abu 'Ali Farmudhi:¹²²⁸ "The shaykh took a handful of the grain and said: 'I would not exchange this for the trust of all'¹²²⁹ the trusting.' Truly, this person recognizes that he engages in taking care of his soul when he knows what help freedom from care and sufficiency of sustenance gives to the traveling of the way."

THE SECOND KIND is that which one gives to people, and that is of four types:

THE FIRST TYPE is voluntary charity. Its spiritual merit, the blessing of the supplications of the poor, their resolve, and their happiness are great in religion and the world. A person who does not have wealth is unable to do this.

THE SECOND TYPE is generosity: that one be hospitable and do good to the brethren even if they be rich, give presents and offer consolation, attend to the people's rights, and perform ceremonies. All of these are laudable even if they be for affluent persons. The trait of generosity is acquired by means of (such acts). Generosity is the greatest of the traits of character, as it is praised.

¹²²⁷ Shaykh Abū al-Qāsim Gurgānī: See Note 915 on Khwajah Abu al-Qasim Gurgani. (Both *Khwājah* and *Shaykh* are titles of respect.)

¹²²⁸ Khwājah Abū 'Alī Fārmudhī: Shaykh Abu 'Ali Farmudi. (In older Khorasani dialect, *d* becomes *dh* in certain circumstances.) See Note 915.

¹²²⁹ "all": thus KH. AA has "most of."

THE THIRD TYPE is the preservation of one's reputation by its means, as when one gives something to a poet, middle-aged (married) women, or to persons who have some expectation from him. If he does not, they will abuse and slander him and revile him. The Messenger (S) has said: "Whatever with which one protects one's reputation from the tongues of backbiters is a voluntary charity, for the path of reviling and slander is closed to them and they are prevented from the harm of busying their hearts with that." If one does not do this, one may also become involved in retaliation, and such enmity is also long-lasting. And this (safeguarding) cannot be accomplished without wealth.

THE FOURTH TYPE is that which one gives to persons so that they serve him; for if every person does all tasks himself with his own hands, such as sweeping, washing, cooking, buying building, etc., all of his time would be consumed in (doing) them. An (untransferable) individual religious duty of each person is that which another cannot do for him, and that is remembrance (of God) and meditation. Spending time for whatever can be done by a representative is foolish, for life is short, the appointed hour is near, the journey to the Hereafter is a long one, and the provisions for (the Hereafter) are many. Every breath is a great treasure that must not be employed in any work that deviates from that. This cannot be arranged without wealth paid to employees to lift these tasks from one. However, doing one's tasks for oneself is a means of obtaining spiritual reward, but this is the work of a person whose degree is that at which his devotion is physical, not spiritual. As for a person who is a devotee of the affairs of the soul by way of knowledge and thought, another must do his tasks so that that service becomes the devotion of the servant¹²³⁰ and the means of (the devotee's) peace for more valuable works than those (physical) jobs (the servants) are doing.

THE THIRD KIND is that which is not given to a specific individual but benefits all, such as for bridges, inns, mosques, hospitals, endowments for the poor, etc. These are public charitable acts and they endure for a long time. One continues to receive their supplications and blessings after death. This, too, cannot be done except with wealth. These are the benefits of wealth in religion.

However, their benefits are not hidden in the world, and (the giver) is held dear and generous because of them. He is independent from people while the people are in need of him. Many friends and brothers may be gotten through that. He is beloved by the hearts of all and no one despises him, and the like.

¹²³⁰ That is, the servant shares in the spiritual reward of his employer whom he enables to perform more valuable works.

AS for the DETRIMENTS OF WEALTH, some are worldly and some are religious. As for the religious detriments, they are of three kinds:

THE FIRST KIND is the facilitation of the way of sin and corruption for a person; for the carnal appetites inside a person themselves demand sin, but the inability (to fulfill those demands) is one of the causes of continence. When the ability appears, if one falls into sin, one will be ruined. However, if one restrains oneself, one falls into tribulation. Patience with ability is more difficult.

THE SECOND KIND is that if a man be strong in his religion and keep himself from sin, he cannot keep himself from the enjoyment of the permitted things, for who possessing wealth will, with the power of that wealth, eat barley bread and wear coarse clothing as did Solomon (A) in his own kingdom? When this person falls into affluence, his body rises against this. He cannot tolerate that (to which he had been accustomed) and the world becomes his Paradise. He hates death and cannot always find the means of luxury lawfully. He begins to take from the doubtful things. He cannot obtain them without the strength of monarchs, so he falls into fawning, dissimulation, hypocrisy, lying, and their¹²³¹ service. When he has gained proximity to them, he is in danger of their aim and displeasure. When he becomes a confidant, he is envied and enemies appear who target him and cause him sorrow. He, too, rises in enmity in retaliation and competition. Mutual envy comes into being. These traits are the causes of all sin, for from this lying, slandering, and ill will towards people, all of the sins of the soul and the tongue originate. The meaning of this, that the love for the world is the source of all sins, is this: all of these (calamities) are its branches and limbs. It is not one detriment, nor ten, nor a hundred. Rather, (its detriments) are innumerable. Indeed, it is a bottomless pit, like the pit of hell that has been created for these people.

THE THIRD KIND—and this does not spring from a person *except him whom God has safeguarded*—is that, even if he does not sin or indulge in luxurious living, and he keeps away from doubtful things, and truly observes the way of humility so that he receives from the lawful and gives justly, the observance of these things occupies his heart, and this pre-occupation (itself) continually restrains him from the remembrance of God Most High and meditation about His Majesty and Greatness. For the secret and heart of all acts of worship is that one be conquered by the remembrance of God Most High so that intimacy with Him is complete and, by means of that, one may become unneeded of

¹²³¹ "their": monarchs'.

everything other than He. This requires a free soul not pre-occupied with anything else. A rich person, if he has landed estates, spends most of his time thinking about development, the enmity of partners, paying taxes, calculations for the farmers, and their care. If he conducts a business, he is occupied with disputes with his partner and his inadequacies, the arrangements for journeys and the seeking of transactions in which there is greater profit. If he has flocks, it is the same. However, no property is more preoccupying than that of the person who, for example, has a buried treasure which he spends according to his need. He is always engaged with its protection and the fear that someone will take it from him, or that it be coveted. The valleys of the worries of the worldly have no end. Whoever desires to be in the world and free from worry is like the person who wishes to go into the water and not get wet.

These are the benefits and detriments of wealth. When the perspicacious examined them, they realized that a sufficient amount of it is an antidote; in excess, it is a poison. The Messenger (S) called his family and said briefly: "Whoever takes more than is sufficient for himself is destroyed, but he does not know it."

However, throwing everything away so that nothing remains and to occupy oneself with the needs of the soul is repugnant in the Law. As the Messenger said, this verse is in the Quran: *And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck, nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.* (Q. 17:29)

DISCLOSING THE HARM OF COVETOUSNESS AND GREED AND THE BENEFIT OF CONTENTMENT

Know that covetousness is a blameworthy trait. Aside from its degradation, which is immediate, and the shame, which will be at the end of the affair if not satisfied, it will generate many bad traits. Whoever desires something from a person will flatter and dissimulate, and his acts of worship (of God) will become hypocrisy. He will endure being held in light esteem and will assist (the person from whom he has some expectation) in the false. The human has been created greedy so that he is never satisfied with what he has; one cannot escape greed and covetousness except with contentment.

The Messenger (S) says: "If a person has two valleys filled with gold, he will desire a third valley; a person's insides cannot be filled except with earth. Whoever turns (to Him), God Most High will cause his repentance." And he (S) said: "All things of a human being become full except two: the hope for living and the love of wealth." And he said: "Blessed is that person who has been shown the way of Islam and has been given a sufficient amount for his sustenance, and is content with that." And he said: "The Holy Spirit breathed into my soul: 'No servant

will die who has not been given the full allotment of his sustenance.' Fear God Most High and seek your sustenance slowly and in goodness." That is, ye should not overreach and be overly ambitious. And he said: "Beware of the doubtful so as to be the most worshipful of mankind. Be content with that which ye possess so that ye may be the most grateful of mankind. And approve for others that which ye approve of for yourselves so that ye may be believers."

'Awf bin Malik al-Ashja'i¹²³² (R) says: "We were with the Messenger (S), seven or eight persons. He said: 'Will ye not pledge loyalty to the Messenger of God Most High?' We said: 'No, we have pledged our loyalty once.' He said again: 'Will ye not pledge loyalty to the Messenger of God Most High?' We showed our hands and said: 'What should we pledge upon?' He said: 'That ye worship God Most High and perform the five obligatory formal prayers and that ye will go forward obediently in whatever He commands.' Then, he spoke softly: 'And ask nothing of anyone.'" ('Awf) said: "And these people were as though a riding crop had fallen from their hands and no one would say: 'Give it back to me.'"

Moses (A) said: "O Lord, who is richer among Thy servants?" He replied: "That person who is content with what I give him." And he asked: "Who is more just?" He replied: "That person who gives justice from himself."

Muhammad Wasi' (R) used to dip bread into water and eat it and would say: "Whoever is satisfied with this has no need of all mankind." Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "Every day an angel cries: 'O son of Adam, a little that suffices for thee is better than a lot from which there is hubris and negligence.'" Sumayt bin 'Ajalan¹²³³ says: "Thy whole stomach is no more than a hand's breadth by a hand's breadth."¹²³⁴ Why must it carry thee off to hell?"

In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High says: "O son of Adam, if I give thee the world, thy portion will be nothing other than thy victuals. Since I shall not give more than thy victuals and I shall include the business of the accounting on others, what goodness is there greater than that which I have done for thee?"

A wise man says: "There is no person more tolerant of pain than the greedy coveter. There is no person whose life is more pleasant than that of him who is content. There is no one whose sorrow is more lasting

¹²³² 'Awf bin Mālik al-Ashja'i: a Companion of the Prophet. In the *Sirah*, he is quoted in a narrative about the expedition against Dhat al-Salasil. In it, he refers to himself as a skilled butcher.

¹²³³ Sumayt bin 'Ajalan: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹²³⁴ "hand's breadth" (*bi-dast*): The equivalent of a *wajab*, a span, with the fingers outspread about 9". Probably the width of the hand is meant here, about 5" by 5".

than the envier. There is no one more carefree than the person who has abandoned the world. There is no person whose regret is greater than the learned evil doer."

And Sha'bi (R) says: "Someone caught a sparrow. (The sparrow) said: 'What dost thou want with me?' He said: 'I shall kill thee and eat thee.' (The sparrow) said: 'Thou wilt not get anything by eating me. I can teach thee three things which are better than thine eating me. However, I shall tell thee one while in thy hand. I shall tell thee another when thou release me so that I can perch on a tree. Then I shall tell thee the third when I fly from the tree to the mountain.' He said: 'Speak!' (The sparrow) said: 'First, regret not anything which leaves thy possession.' He released the bird and it flew to a tree and perched there. Then he said: 'Tell me the second thing.' (The bird) said: 'Never believe absurd words.' And it flew away and perched on the mountain. Then it said: 'O wretch! If thou hadst killed me, there were two pearls in my stomach, each weighing twenty mithqals.¹²³⁵ Thou would have become rich!' That man bit his finger and said: 'Alas! What a pity! Now tell me the third thing.' It said: 'Thou hast forgotten the first two. What wilt thou do with the third? I told thee not to regret the past. I told thee not to believe the absurd. My flesh and feathers together do not weigh two mithqals! How could there be two pearls inside me each weighing twenty mithqals?' Having said this, it took wing and flew off." This parable was related so that it be known that when covetousness appears, a person believes all (kinds of) absurdities.

Ibn Sammak (R) says: "Covetousness is a rope around thy neck and shackles on thy feet. Take off the rope so that thou may remove the shackles from thy feet and be saved."

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT OF GREED AND COVETOUSNESS

Know that its medicine is a compound of the bitterness of patience, the sweetness of knowledge, and the hardship of deed. All medicines for the sickness of the soul are mixed from these. The obtaining of this treatment is in five things:

THE FIRST is deed. And that is that one reduce one's own expenses and be satisfied with coarse clothing and dry bread. One eats stew occasionally, for that much is without coveting and without greed and may be easily obtained. However, if one lives luxuriously and spends a lot, one cannot be satisfied.

The Messenger (S) said: "*He is not impoverished who limits himself.*" Whoever spends according to rule will not become poor. And

¹²³⁵ "twenty mithqals": about 1.75 ounces each, according to the value given in Steingass.

he said: "There are three things in which the people's salvation lies: fear of God most High in private and in public, spending according to rule in poverty and wealth, and giving justice (evenly) in anger and happiness."

Someone saw Abu Darda (R) picking up date stones and saying: "Observing moderation in livelihood is a part of the religious knowledge of a man."

And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will keep whoever spends according to rule free from want. He will keep whoever spends without reckoning poor. God Most High loves anyone who remembers Him." And he (S) said: "Planned spending and moderation are one half of livelihood."

THE SECOND TREATMENT is that when one has obtained ones needs for the day, one should not worry too much about the future, for Satan is always saying to him: "Life is long and tomorrow thou mayest not get anything. Exert thyself today and do not rest. Look for it wherever it may be." *Satan promises you poverty and enjoins upon you lewdness.* (Q. 2:268) He desires that, out of the fear of destitution tomorrow, he keep thee in toil for the present and in the form of the poor so that thou wilt be ridiculed; for it may be that tomorrow itself will not come. If it comes, the pain of that will not be greater than that into which thou hast cast thyself immediately today. The avoidance of this lies in knowing that sustenance does not appear because of greed, but sustenance is pre-ordained and will certainly come.

The Messenger (S) passed by Ibn Mas'ud and saw that he was very sad. He said: "Do not burden thy soul with much sorrow, for whatever has been destined shall be. Whatever thy sustenance is will certainly come to thee. Thou must know that the sustenance of a servant (of God) is more often from a place where thou dost not expect it." God Most High says: *And whoever keeps his duty to God, God will appoint a way out for him; and will provide for him from a quarter whence he has no expectation.* (Q. 65:2-3) The sustenance for whoever is virtuous will come from a place where it was not expected.

Sufyan Thawri (R) says: "All that is, is of two kinds: that which is my sustenance which comes to me without haste, and that which is the sustenance of others and will not come to me with the combined effort of the inhabitants of heaven and earth. So, what is the use of my being anxious about seeking (it)?"

THE THIRD TREATMENT is that one know that if he does not covet but is patient, he will be afflicted. However, if he covets and is not patient, he becomes both wretched and afflicted. He will be blamed and is in danger of punishment in the Hereafter, while he gets spiritual reward and is praised for (not coveting and being patient). Indeed,

affliction with spiritual reward and self-respect is preferable to affliction with censure, reproach, and the fear of punishment (in the Hereafter).

The Messenger (S) said: "The honor of a believer lies in that he be independent of people." 'Ali (R) says: "Thou art the prisoner of him from whom thou hast a need. Thou art the commander of whoever is in need of thee. Thou art the peer and equal of him from whom thou hast no need."

THE FOURTH TREATMENT is that one reflect upon why he has this greed and covetousness. If he has it for the comfort of the belly, an ass and a cow eat more than he does. If he has it out of sexual appetite, the swine and bear are ahead of him in that. If he has it for ostentation and fine apparel, he will see many Jews and Christians exceeding him in that aspect. If he abandons covetousness and is content with a little, he will find no equal for himself except the prophets, the saints, and the truly righteous. Moreover, it would be better if he were like those rather than like the others.

THE FIFTH TREATMENT is that one reconsider the harm of property when it becomes great. In this world, it is in danger of vermin, and in the Hereafter he will enter heaven five hundred years after the poor. One must always look at a person who is beneath him in the world so that he will continually express gratitude, and not look at the state of the rich, lest God's blessings appear contemptible to him. The Messenger (S) says: "Look at the person who is below you in the world."

Iblis is always saying to thee: "Why art thou content when so-and-so and so-and-so have so much wealth?" When thou abstainest from the world, he says: "Why dost thou exercise caution when so-and-so and so-and-so devour the unlawful?" And he continually reminds thee of those who have more than thou hast in the world and who are less than thou art in religion. But spiritual happiness is the opposite of this: thou must always look at the great in religion so as to see thyself remiss. Thou shouldst look at the poor in the world so as to see oneself rich.

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL REWARD OF GENEROSITY

Know that the state of anyone who does not have wealth must be contentment, not avarice. If one is wealthy, his state must be generosity, not stinginess. The Messenger (S) said: "Generosity is a tree in heaven. Whoever is generous has touched one of its branches. It carries him to heaven. Stinginess is a tree in hell. Whoever is stingy has touched one of its branches. It carries him to hell." And he said: "There are two traits to which God Most High is hostile: miserliness and a bad disposition." And he said: "God Most High has not created any saint except that he be

generous and of a good disposition." And he said: "The sin of the generous is overlooked, for whenever he stumbles (into error), God Most High is his Helper." The Messenger (S) captured some people in a war against the unbelievers. All were executed save one. 'Ali (R) said: "All have the same religion, the same sin, and the same god, why didst thou not execute him?" The Messenger (S) said: "Gabriel came and informed that I should not execute him because he was generous."

And he said: "The food of the open-handed is medicine for the heart; the food of the miser is a disease." And he said: "A generous person is close to God Most High, near to Paradise, near to the people, and far from hell. The miser is far from God Most High, far from Paradise, far from the people, and near to hell. God loves the generous ignoramus more than the pious miser. The worst of afflictions is miserliness." And he said: "The saints of my people in heaven have reached that place not through formal prayer and fasting, but through generosity, a soul free of deceit, and through counsel and compassion for the people." It is related in the Traditions: "God Most High revealed to Moses (A): 'Do not kill Samiri,¹²³⁶ for he is generous.'"

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: 'Ali (R) says: "When the world gives thee good fortune, spend so that it not diminish. When it turns away from thee, also spend, for it will not remain." Someone wrote a petition to Husayn bin 'Ali. He accepted it and said: "Thy request is just." He was asked: "Why didst thou not read it?" (Husayn) replied: "Then God Most High would have asked me about the shame of his standing before me."

Muhammad bin al-Munkadir (R) relates the story of Umm Dhurrah,¹²³⁷ the serving woman of ' (R). She said: "Once Ibn al-Zubayr¹²³⁸ sent two sacks of silver and 180,000 dirhams to 'Ayishah (R).

¹²³⁶ Samiri or al-Samiri, mentioned in the Quran (Q. 20:87-88) in connection with the story of Moses and the golden calf. He proposed the making of the calf. In the Biblical version (Ex. 32), the making of the calf is in response to a popular demand to which Aaron accedes. Some are of the opinion that the name *Samiri* should be translated 'Samaritan, although this would be anachronistic.' Samiri and the Story of the Golden Calf are discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective*, and in the chapters on Moses extracted from that in a separate volume, *Moses*.

¹²³⁷ Umm Dhurrah: No other information about her from available standard sources at present.

¹²³⁸ Ibn al-Zubayr: 'Abdullāh bin al-Zubayr, a Companion of the Prophet, was the first Muslim child born after the Migration (See Note 1134 about Asma') AH1/622CE. He was a courageous soldier and participated in many of the wars that followed upon the expansion of Islam after the death of the Prophet, fighting in North Africa and Persia. He sided with 'Ayishah against 'Ali and later rose against the rule of the Umayyads. Hajjaj (see Note 1161), was dispatched to put the rebellion down. After a siege of six months, his 97 year-old mother lived to see her son—then about 70—killed and his dead body crucified at Hajjaj's order (AH73/692CE).

She called for trays and distributed all of it to the poor and the deserving. That evening, she said to me: 'Bring me some food so that I may break my fast.' I brought her some bread and olive oil, as there was no meat. I said: 'Thou spent all of that money today! What would it matter if thou hadst bought some meat for us with one dirham?' She said: 'If thou hadst reminded me, I would have done so.'"

When Mu'awiyah (R) passed through Madinah, Husayn (R) said to Hasan (R): "Do not bid him farewell quickly." When Mu'awiyah left Madinah, (Hasan) said (to him): "We have a debt." He went after him and told him the story of his debt. One of Mu'awiyah's camels had been left behind the others. (Mu'awiyah) asked: "What is that camel carrying?" He was told: "It is gold, 80,000 dinars." (Mu'awiyah) said: "Give it to Hasan to be applied to the debt."

Abu al-Hasan Madayini¹²³⁹ (R) says: "Hasan, Husayn, and 'Abdullah Ja'far,¹²⁴⁰ may God be pleased with them all; all three were traveling on the Pilgrimage. On the way, they became hungry and the camel bearing their provisions had gone on ahead of them. So, they remained hungry and thirsty for a time. Then they came upon an old Arab woman. They said: 'Dost thou have anything to drink?' She replied that she had. She milked the sheep that she had and gave them the milk. They drank it, then asked: 'Dost thou have any food?' She said: 'No, except for this sheep. Slaughter it and eat it.' They slaughtered it and ate it. Then, they said: 'We are of the Quraysh. When we return from this journey, come to us so that we may do thee some kindness.' They went away. When the old woman's husband returned, he became angry and said: 'Thou gavest our sheep to some people and thou dost not know who there were!'

"Time passed. Because of their poverty, that old woman and her husband happened to come to Madinah. They collected camel dung and sold it. One day, the old woman was selling in a neighborhood. Hasan (R) was sitting at the door of a house and he recognized her. He said: 'Old woman! Dost thou know me?' She replied: 'No.' He said: 'I was thy guest when I came to thee on such-and-such a day.' The old woman said: 'Art thou he?' He said: 'Yes.' Then Hasan ordered that she be given a thousand sheep and a thousand dinars. Then he sent her with his own slave to Husayn (R). Husayn (R) asked: 'What did my brother give

¹²³⁹ Abū al-Hasan Madāyini: the surname indicates an association with Madā'in, the Arabic name for Ctesiphon, a Sassanid capital on the banks of the Tigris River near Baghdad.

¹²⁴⁰ 'Abdullah bin Ja'far: "Abdullāh bin Ja'far, a Companion of the Prophet. He was born in Ethiopia of parents who had fled there at the Prophet's order during the period of intense Quraysh hostility at Makkah. Returning to Madinah with his father, he earned the epithet "the Sea of Generosity" because of his liberality. He fought on the side of 'Ali at the battle of Siffin. He died at Madinah AH80/708CE.

thee?' She said: 'A thousand dinars and a thousand sheep.' Husayn gave her the same things and sent her with the slave to 'Abdullah bin Ja'far (R). He asked: 'What did those two give thee?' She said: 'Two thousand sheep and two thousand dinars.' He gave her the same as that which the other two had given together and said: 'If thou hadst come to me first, I would have thrown them into difficulty! That is, I would have given so much that they would not have been able to match it!' And so she left and brought the four thousand dinars and four thousand dinars to her husband."

There was a man famous for his generosity among the Arabs. Some people were coming back from a journey and they were hungry. They had stopped at the entrance to a neighborhood and gone to sleep hungry. One of them had a camel. He saw a corpse in a dream and it said: "Wilt thou sell thy camel for a thoroughbred one?" It was said that the dead man had a good camel that he left behind. He said: "I would sell it," and he gave it to him. The corpse accepted the camel and killed it. When that man awoke from sleep, he found his own camel killed. A pot was set up and they cooked and ate it. When they left that place, a caravan appeared. One of the caravaneers called to the owner of the camel, using his name. When he drew near, he said: "Didst thou buy a thoroughbred camel from such-and-such a deceased person?" He answered: "I bought it, but I bought it in a dream." Then, he related the story. The other said: "This is the thoroughbred camel, take it! Last night I saw my father in a dream who said: 'If thou be my son, give this thoroughbred to such-and-such a person.'"

Abu Sa'id Khargushi¹²⁴¹ relates: "There was a man in Egypt who used to help the poor and secure things for them. A baby was born to one of those who had nothing. He said: 'I went to him and he came and asked everyone (for help) on my behalf. There were no gifts. Then, he took me beside a grave, sat down, and said: "May God Most High have mercy upon thee! Thou hast always taken away the sorrow of the poor and given that which is necessary. I have made efforts on behalf of the child of this poor man, but there were no gifts." Then, he rose and took a dinar that he had and divided it, giving half to me. He said: "I am lending this to thee until something is found."'" That man was called Muhtasib. (The father of the child) said: 'I accepted that half dinar and took care of the

¹²⁴¹ Abū Sa'īd Khargūshī: a contemporary of Shaykh Abū 'Alī Daqqāq, also mentioned in *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'*. ('Attar) Shaykh Abū 'Alī al-Hasan bin Muhammad al-Daqqāq was a mystic and preacher at Nishapur and the teacher of Abū al-Qasim Qushayri, the author of *Risalah*. Shaykh 'Abū 'Alī died AH406/1015CE or AH412/1021CE, from which we may assume that Abū Sa'īd was active during the late 4th and early 5th Hijri centuries (late 10th and early 11th centuries CE). Both Arabic editions of the *Revival* I have consulted have *Hargūshī* instead of *Khargūshī*, while both Persian editions in my possession have the form I have used. The difference, again, is a single dot.

child.' That night Muhtasib saw a corpse in a dream that said: 'I have heard all that thou hast said, but today we do not have permission concerning a reply. Now, go to my house and tell my children to dig where the fireplace is. There are five hundred golden dinars there. It should be given to that man whose child has just been born.'

"The next day Muhtasib went and did as he had been told. He found the five hundred dinars and said to (the dead man's) children: 'The dream was not about me. This gold is your property. Take it.' They said to him: 'Our deceased father is generous! Should we the living be miserly? Take all of it to that man as (our father) said.' Muhtasib picked up that money and brought it to the man. That man took one dinar, broke it in half, and gave it to Muhtasib in repayment of his loan. Then, (keeping the other half of the dinar) he said: 'Give the rest to the poor, for I have no need of more than this.'" Abu Sa'id Khargushi (R) says: "I do not know which of them was more generous." And he said: "When I reached Egypt, I sought the home of that man. His grandchildren had remained there and I saw them and the mien of goodness was manifest upon them. I remembered this verse: *And their father was righteous.*" (Q. 18:82)¹²⁴²

Do not hold it strange that the blessing of generosity continues after death and is revealed through dreams, for the custom of Khalil¹²⁴³ (A) was to entertain guests and hospitality. After his death, the blessing remains on that mausoleum¹²⁴⁴ to the present day.¹²⁴⁵

Rabi bin Sulayman¹²⁴⁶ (R) recounts that when Shafi'i (R) reached Makkah, he had one thousand dinars with him. He pitched a tent outside of Makkah and poured out that money on a cloth. He would hand a handful of the money to whoever greeted him with "Peace." Before the time of the midday obligation,¹²⁴⁷ nothing remained of the gold he had strewn upon the cloth. Once, someone seized (Shafi'i's) horse to sit upon. He said to Rabi': "Give him 4,000 dinars and apologize to him." One day, 'Ali (R) was weeping. He was asked: "Why art thou weeping?" He replied: "It has been seven days since any guest has come to my house."

Someone went to a friend and said: "I owe four hundred dirhams," and he gave it to him and wept. His wife said: "If thou wert

¹²⁴² The Quranic verse refers to the father of the two orphans in the story of encounter of Moses and Khidr. He had hidden a treasure for them under a wall which Khidr repaired as the time had not yet come for its discovery.

¹²⁴³ "Khalil," an epithet of Abraham, meaning "the Friend (of God)."

¹²⁴⁴ "mausoleum": the Tomb of Abraham (*Mashhad-i Khalil*) at Hebron in Palestine.

¹²⁴⁵ "present day": that is, the time of al-Ghazzali.

¹²⁴⁶ Rab' bin Sulayman: al-Rabi' bin Sulaymān, Abū Muḥammad. An important disciple of al-Shafi'i (see Note 401), he was a well-known jurisprudent in Egypt. He died AH270/883-4CE.

¹²⁴⁷ "the midday obligation": the noon obligatory formal prayer.

going to cry about it, thou ought not have given it to him." He said: "I am weeping because I had been negligent about his condition so that when he fell in need for the money he had to ask me for it."

DISCLOSING THE BLAMEWORTHINESS OF MISERLINESS

God Most High says: *...and whoever is saved from his own avarice; they are the successful!* (Q. 59:9) He who guards against the miserliness of his self achieves success. And the Most High and Holy also said: *And let not those think who are niggardly with that which God has given them of His bounty that it is better for them; nay, it is worse for them. That with which they were niggardly will hang about their necks on the Day of Resurrection.* (Q. 3:180) Do not suppose that it is better for those persons who are ever stingy with that which God Most High has given them! Rather, it is their undoing and it will be soon that whatever they withheld out of miserliness will become a collar thrown around their necks at the Resurrection.

The Messenger (S) said: "Keep your distance from miserliness, for those people who were before you were destroyed because of miserliness. Their miserliness was such that they shed blood unjustly and held the forbidden to be lawful." And he (S) said: "Three things are destroyers: stinginess when it is obeyed, that is, that thou act in obedience to it and not oppose it; the vain desires which thou pursuest; and the self-conceit of a man."

Abu Sa'id Khudrī¹²⁴⁸ (R) says: "Two men went to the Messenger (S) and asked for the price of a camel from him. He gave it to them. When they left, they went to 'Umar and thanked him. 'Umar told the Messenger (S) about this. (The Messenger) said: 'Such-and-such a person received more than that and did not express his thanks.' Then he said: 'Whenever one of you comes importuning and takes something from me, it is a fire that he has in his hands.' 'Umar said: 'Since it is like fire, why dost thou give it to them?' He answered: 'Thou sayest that the miser is more excused¹²⁴⁹ than the oppressor is. What oppression is greater to God Most High than miserliness? God Most High with honor and greatness has sworn that He will not allow a miser into heaven.'"

One day, the Messenger was circumambulating (the Ka'bah). A person had his hand on the ring on the door of the House (of God), and was saying: "O Lord God! By the sanctity of this House forgive my sin." He (S) said: "Tell me what thy sin was." (The man) said: "My sin is

¹²⁴⁸ Abū Sa'id Khudrī: his father was Malik bin Sinan who, when the Prophet was wounded at Uhud, sucked the blood from his face. Abu Sa'id is a narrator of many Traditions.

¹²⁴⁹ "excused" (*ma'dhūr*), following AA's text. HK has *maghrūr* which can mean "self-deluded" or "haughty."

greater than that it could be described." (The Messenger) asked: "Is thy sin greater or the earth?" He answered: "My sin." (The Messenger) asked: "Is thy sin greater or the heavens?" He answered: "My sin." (The Messenger) said: "Is thy sin greater or the Pedestal (of the Throne of God)?" He said: "My sin." (The Messenger) asked: "Is thy sin greater or God Most High?" He answered: "God Most High." He (S) said: "So say what it is." He replied: "O Messenger of God, I have much wealth. When a beggar appears in the distance, I suppose that a fire has come to fall upon me." The Messenger (S) said: "Get away from me so that I do not burn in thy fire! By that God Who sent me in truth, if thou perform obligatory prayers for a thousand years between the Corner and the Station¹²⁵⁰ and weep until a stream flows out of thine eyes and trees grow, but thou die a miser, thy place will not be other than hell. The miserliness of the miser is unbelief and unbelief is in the fire! *Woe unto thee!* Hast thou not heard that God Most High says: *As for him who is niggardly, surely he is niggardly for his own soul.* (Q: 47:38) ...*and whoever is saved from his own avarice; they are the successful!*" (Q: 59:9)

Ka'b used to say: "Every day two angels are appointed for each person. They cry: 'O Lord! If he hoards his wealth, waste it not on him; if he spends it, replace it.'" Abu Hanifah (R) says: "I do not set right (the miser, nor do I listen to his testimony, for miserliness will lead him to the limit of hair-splitting and he will seek more than is his right and take it."

John, the son of Zechariah, saw the devil. John asked: "Whom dost thou dislike more and whom dost thou love more?" He replied: "I love more the miserly ascetic, for he is always in agony while he worships. His miserliness nullifies (his worship). I dislike more the generous sinner, for he eats and lives well, and I fear that God Most High will have mercy upon him because of his generosity and forgive him."

DISCLOSING THE SPIRITUAL REWARD OF MUNIFICENCE

Know that munificence is greater than generosity, for a generous person is one who gives of that which he himself does not need, whereas munificence is that—though one needs something—he spends it for the needs of others. Just as the perfection of generosity is that one give what he needs oneself, the perfection of miserliness is that one withhold from satisfying his own important needs so that if he become ill, he does not treat (himself).¹²⁵¹ In his soul, there are expectations: he is always waiting to ask from others, but cannot buy with his own money.

¹²⁵⁰ "between the Corner and the Station": the open space between the western corner (*rukṇ*) of the Ka'bah in which the Black Stone is set and the Station of Abraham (*Maqām-i Ibrāhīm*).

¹²⁵¹ That is, that one does not spend the necessary funds to achieve a cure.

The merit of munificence is tremendous. God Most High praised the Helpers in these (words): ... *and (the Helpers) preferred (the fugitives from Makkah) above themselves, even though poverty was their lot.* (Q. 59:9) The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will forgive whoever gets something which he desires, but abandons his own desire and gives it (to another)." 'Ayishah (R) says: "We never ate our fill in the house of the Messenger three days in succession. We could have eaten it, but we gave it (on others)."

A guest arrived for the Messenger and there was nothing in his house. One of the Helpers came and took (the guest) to his own home. He had a little food. The lamp was extinguished on some pretext and the food was placed before the guest, while (the Helper's) family moved their hands back and forth from the food without taking or eating anything so that the guest might eat his fill. The next day, the Messenger (S) said to the Helper: "God, may He be honored and glorified, was astonished at your character and generosity with the guest and He sent this verse: *and they preferred (the fugitives) over themselves, even though poverty was their lot.*" (Q. 59:9)

Moses (A) said: "Show me the station of Muhammad (S)." (God) replied: "Thou wouldst not be able to endure it, but I shall show thee one of the lower stations." When He showed it, (Moses) was afraid that he would swoon from its brilliance and splendor. He said: "O Lord God! How was that obtained?" (God) said: "With generosity, O Moses. There is no servant who has been munificent once in his lifetime for whom I would not be ashamed to settle his account. His spiritual reward is Paradise, wherever he desires."

'Abdullah bin Ja'far¹²⁵² (R) stopped at a date palm grove during a journey. A black slave was guarding it. They brought the slave three loaves of bread. A dog came in. That slave gave the dog one loaf to eat. He threw it another loaf to eat, and then he threw it the third. 'Abdullah said: "O slave, what art thou given each day?" He replied: "That which thou hast just seen. Three loaves of bread." ('Abdullah) asked: "Then why didst thou give all of it to the dog?" (The slave) answered: "There is no dog here. It has come from far away. I did not want it to remain hungry." ('Abdullah) asked: "What wilt thou do today?" He answered: "I shall be patient." ('Abdullah) said: "Glory be to God! They blame me for my generosity! This slave is more generous than I!" He ordered that the date palm grove be purchased. He bought the slave and freed him, and gave him that date palm grove.

The Messenger (S) was wary of assassination by the unbelievers. 'Ali (R) slept in his place in order to sacrifice himself should they make

¹²⁵² 'Abdullāh bin Ja'far: Possibly, the man "about whom anecdotes were told," or another of the same name who died at Madinah in AH80/699-700CE. Both are mentioned in *The Fihrist*.

an assault.¹²⁵³ God, may He be honored and glorified, said to (the angels) Gabriel and Michael (R): "I have established brotherhood between you, but I have made the life of one of you longer than that of the other. Which of you will bestow that (on the other)?" Each one of them wanted the longer life for himself. God Most High said to them: "Why did ye not do what 'Ali (R) has done? I gave him as a brother to Muhammad (S), and ('Ali) has sacrificed his own life and bestowed it on (Muhammad) and has slept in his place. Both of you go to the earth and guard him from enemies." They came to earth. Gabriel stood by ('Ali's) pillow and Michael stood by his foot. They said: "How fortunate thou art, O son of Abu Talib!"¹²⁵⁴ For God Most High boasts of thee to His Own angels!" Then, this verse was revealed: *Of mankind is he who would sell himself seeking the pleasure of God [and God has compassion on His servants].* (Q. 2:207)

Husayn Antaki¹²⁵⁵ (R) was one of the great shaykhs. Of an evening, thirty-odd companions would gather around him. They did not have enough bread. What they had, they broke into pieces and offered it. They removed the lamp and sat down. When the lamp was brought back, the bread was as it was, for, out of munificence, no one had eaten anything so that his companion might eat.

Hudhayfah 'Adwa¹²⁵⁶ says: "On the day of the battle of Tabuk,¹²⁵⁷ many Muslims were martyred. I took up some water and sought my cousin. I found him a breath away from death. I said: "Dost thou want some water?" He said: "I do." Someone else cried: "Ah! I thirst!" (My cousin) pointed to him and said: "Take it to him." I did that.

¹²⁵³ This a reference to the famous incident during the migration of the Muslims from Makkah to Madinah. Most of them had already been sent ahead, but a few remained in Makkah including Abu Bakr, 'Ali, and the Prophet himself. The Quraysh leadership opposing the mission of the Prophet decided it would be an opportune time to assassinate the Prophet now that the most of his supporters had left Makkah. On the night before the Prophet was to leave, 'Ali slept in the Prophet's bed wrapped in his green mantle while the Quraysh kept watch to catch the Prophet when he came out in the morning. When 'Ali came out instead, the guards were astonished. The Quraysh searched the city for the Prophet in vain. Meanwhile, the Prophet and Abu Bakr had spent the night in a cave, but that is another famous incident: the spider's web.

¹²⁵⁴ "son of Abu Talib": 'Ali was the son of Abu Talib.

¹²⁵⁵ Husayn Antākī: Husayn of Antioch, the modern Antakya in southern Turkey. No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹²⁵⁶ Hudhayfah 'Adwā: No other information about him from available standard sources at present. Presumably, not the same as Hudhayfah bin al-Yaman, see Note 1043.

¹²⁵⁷ Battle of Tabuk: occurred during the expedition led by the Prophet (S) in AH9/630CE, less than two years before his death. Tabuk is located in the northwestern Hijaz in modern Saudi Arabia. It was the first major brush of the nascent Muslim commonwealth with the outskirts of the Byzantine Empire. It was also a station on the Hijaz railroad dismantled by Lawrence of Arabia during the First World War (1914-1918).

It was Hisham bin al-'As.¹²⁵⁸ He was near giving up his life. I said: "Have some water." Someone cried: "Ah!" Hisham said with a sign that I should take the water to that person. I went to him, but he had died. When I returned to Hisham, he had died, and when I returned to my cousin, he had also died."

It is said that no one leaves this world as he entered it except Bishr Hafī (R). At the time of his death, a beggar came in asking for something. (Bishr) had nothing but a tunic. He took it off and gave it to him. He sought to borrow a garment and received the command.¹²⁵⁹

DISCLOSING THE DEFINITION OF GENEROSITY AND MISERLINESS AND WHO IS GENEROUS AND WHO IS MISERLY

Know that everyone thinks himself generous while others consider him a miser. Consequently, it is necessary that the truth about this be ascertained—for (miserliness) is a great illness. So long as it is not diagnosed, it is not treated. There is no one who will give away all that he possesses. If he becomes a miser because of this,¹²⁶⁰ everyone is a miser. So, in this regard a great deal has been said. Most of it is of the opinion that whoever withholds that which the Law has made his obligation (to give) is a miser. If he can give easily, he is not a miser. In our opinion, this is not praiseworthy. Whoever returns bread to a baker and meat to a butcher (claiming) that (the seller) has not given full weight is a miser.¹²⁶¹ Whoever does not give the expenses for his wife and children as the judge has stipulated, and refuses a single morsel of that, is a miser. Whoever has bread before him and hides it when a poor man appears in the distance is a miser. Therefore, the correct opinion is that he is a miser who does not give what he can and what ought to be given.

Wealth has been created for a wise purpose. When wisdom necessitates giving, withholding is miserliness. That which can and should be given is that which the Law—or generosity—commands must be given. The duty of the Law is plain. The Law has limited itself to that amount which misers have not the strength to endure, as He said: *If He should ask it of you and importune you, ye would hoard it and He would expose your ill will.* (Q. 47:37)

¹²⁵⁸ Hishām bin al-ʿĀs bin Wāʾil al-Sahmī: According to Ibn Ishaq, with several others, he planned to accompany ʿUmar bin al-Khattāb when the latter emigrated to Madinah, but apostasized and stayed back. Ibn Ishaq does not mention his participation in the events at Tabuk. (Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, p. 216. See bibliography.)

¹²⁵⁹ "he received the command": that is, he died.

¹²⁶⁰ "this": his not giving away everything he possessed.

¹²⁶¹ The AA text reverses this sentence: "If he cannot give easily, he is a miser."

As for the duty of generosity, it becomes miserliness according to the amount of wealth one possesses. There are many things which are customarily unbecoming in the wealthy, but not in the poor; or are unbecoming with one's kith and kin, but not with strangers; or are unbecoming with friends, but not with others; or are unbecoming with guests, but the like are not unbecoming in selling and transactions; or are unbecoming amongst the elderly, but not amongst the young; or are unbecoming amongst men, but not amongst women.

Therefore, the standard limit of this is that the preservation of the wealth be the object, but there may be a motive that is a greater object than the preservation of wealth. When that motive is more important, holding on (to wealth) is miserliness. When its preservation is more important, spending is extravagance. Both of these are despicable.

So, when a guest arrives, observing (the requirements of) generosity are more important than holding on to (money). One's withholding with the excuse that "I have not paid the poor tax yet" is unbecoming and is miserliness. When one's neighbor is hungry, and one has plenty of food, withholding (food from the neighbor) is miserliness.

However, when one has fulfilled the requirements of the Law and generosity and there is still much wealth, seeking the spiritual reward of the Hereafter through voluntary charity is important. Holding on to money against changes of fortune is also important, but, in the opinion of the saints, giving precedence to this over the object of spiritual reward is miserliness; but in popular opinion it is not miserliness.

Thus, if one confines oneself to the duties of the Religious Law and generosity, one escapes (the taint of) miserliness, but one attains the level of generosity when one exceeds those (obligations of giving). One attains a degree in generosity according to how much he exceeds (the required). Each person will obtain a spiritual reward according to his own amount, whether it be small or great. Generous, then, is the person who does not regret his giving. If one is compelled to give, it is not generosity. If one expects praise, gratitude, and reciprocity, it is not generosity. The openhanded and the generous are, in truth, those who give without any motive. This is impossible for a human being. Rather, it is an attribute of God Most High. However, when a person is content with the spiritual reward of the Hereafter and a good reputation, it is sufficient. He is called generous metaphorically, for in fact, he does not seek any compensation. In this world, that is generosity.

As for generosity in religion, it is that one not fear to sacrifice oneself for the love of God Most High without any expectation of compensation. The love for God Most High itself is one's motive. Self-sacrifice is the motivation itself and its own pleasure. When one expects something, it is barter, not generosity.

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT OF MISERLINESS

Know that this treatment is also a compound of knowledge and practice:

THE KNOWLEDGE, which is first, is recognizing the cause of the miserliness, for no sickness can be treated when the cause is not known. The cause is love for the carnal appetites, for they cannot be satisfied without wealth, and also the hope for a long life. If the miser knew that nothing was left of his life but a day or a year, it would be easier for him to part with his money, unless he has children. In that case, he would consider the survival of his son as the survival of himself and his miserliness would become even more firmly established. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "A child is a mine of miserliness, cowardice, and ignorance."

Sometimes a vain appetite is born of the love for wealth, or not for an appetite: the wealth itself becomes his beloved. There is many an old man who knows that he has enough money for as long as he will live and that his income and his estates will be sufficient for his wife and children until the Resurrection, irrespective of the heavy expenses he bears. But if he falls ill, he does not seek treatment, nor does he pay the poor rate. His passion is keeping gold buried in the earth. Even though he knows that he will (surely) die, nonetheless, his miserliness prevents him from spending of that. This is a great sickness, which is infrequently cured.

Now that thou hast understood the cause, the treatment for the love of the carnal appetites may be accomplished with a little contentment and enduring the abandonment of the carnal appetites until one becomes indifferent to wealth. The treatment for the expectations of life lies in one's frequent reflection upon death. One should not look to his peers, for they were heedless, just as he. They died suddenly and were filled with regret, and their enemies divided their wealth unjustly.

The fear of poverty for one's children may be treated with the knowledge that He Who created them also appointed their sustenance for them. If poverty has been decreed, they will not become wealthy from (their father's) miserliness. Instead, they will waste the money. If wealth has been decreed, it will appear from another place. He does not notice that there are many rich persons who have not received any inheritance from their fathers and there are many persons who had received inheritances, but have lost all of them. He realizes that if the child is obedient to God Most High, that itself will suffice. Otherwise, poverty may be to his religious and worldly advantage, lest he spend his wealth for corrupt purposes.

One should also reflect upon other Traditions that have come down (to us) concerning the baseness of miserliness and in praise of generosity. (The Traditions) hold that the place of the miser is none other

than hell, even if he is devout (in the performance of religious obligations). What benefit is there or will there be in wealth taking precedence over buying thyself back from hell and into the pleasure of God Most High?

One should reflect more about the circumstances of misers, how displeasing they are to the hearts (of men) and how despised they are in the eyes of others. Everyone is hostile to them and censures them. He must comprehend that, like them, he too is displeasing, abject, and closefisted in the hearts and eyes of the people.

PRACTICAL TREATMENTS: When one has reflected upon these fully, if the illness is not of long duration so that it be untreatable, his desire to spend must be stimulated. He must be apply himself to the practical treatment. He must hold to the first impulse¹²⁶² and begin to spend quickly. Abu al-Hasan Bushanjah¹²⁶³ (R) was in a toilet. He called to a disciple, saying: "Take my shirt and give it to a poor person." (The disciple) said: "Why dost thou not wait until thou come out?" He replied: "I am afraid that another impulse might appear, preventing that."

It is not possible to abandon miserliness without giving away wealth. Just as a lover will not escape love until he goes on a journey that separates him from his beloved, the treatment for the love of money is also separation—from money. In truth, it is better for him to throw it into the sea and escape the love for (money) than to hold on to his miserliness.

Amongst the benign stratagems, remedies, and methods, one is to deceive one's self with a good name and say: "Spend, so that people will call thee generous think thee good." Let the greed for dissimulation and rank overcome the greed for wealth so that when one escapes the latter, he may then treat the dissimulation, as a child is given something consoling, something that he likes, when he is weaned from milk, so that in busying himself with that he will forget the milk. This is a good way to treat meanness of character. One trait overcomes another trait so that one may escape the strength of the former. It is as when, if blood cannot be washed out of clothing with water, it is washed with urine until (the blood) is washed out. Then, the urine is washed out with water.

Whoever cuts off miserliness from himself with dissimulation has washed filth with filth, but when the dissimulation does not become established, he has profited. Indeed, even if the hypocrisy becomes

¹²⁶² "the first impulse" (*khāṭir-i auwāl*): among the Sufis, a spiritual visitation (*wārid*) that appears in the soul without previous thought or plan. It may be inspired divinely, by angels, or the senses, or Satan. Ghazzali is obviously referring to it in a positive sense.

¹²⁶³ Abu al-Hasan Bushanjah: 'Alī bin Ahmad bin Sahl Abū al-Ḥasan Būshanjah or Būshanjī. A contemporary and disciple of Abu 'Alī Daqqāq. (See Note 1241 on Abu Sa'id Khargushi.)

established, he has profited, even though miserliness and the pride from fine praise are from the world¹²⁶⁴ of human nature. However, in the world of mankind, there are both dung heaps and flower gardens. Miserliness is the dung heap of the world of human nature and generosity for one's good name is the flower garden of the world of human nature. Generosity with hypocrisy is not forbidden. It is forbidden in acts of worship, and that is all. Giving and possessing for the sake of God are outside of the world of human nature, and are fully praiseworthy.

So, it is not proper to object to a miser, saying: "So-and-so spends for show," for spending for show is better than parsimony and miserliness without dissimulation, just as being in a flower garden is better than being in a dung heap. The treatment of miserliness is that which has been said: perseverance and taking pains to give until it becomes one's nature.

Some shaykhs have treated their disciples by not permitting anyone a separate chamber which he could set his heart upon. When he would see that (a disciple) do that, he would send him to another chamber and give his chamber to another. He would see new footgear on (a disciple's) foot that (the disciple) kept admiring. (The shaykh) would order him to give them to another.

The Messenger (S) put fine straps on his footgear, then his eye fell on them while (engaged) in formal prayer. He ordered the old straps replaced and he threw out the new. When *he* does thus, it is plain that there is no remedy for cutting off the heart from property except giving of oneself to God. So long as the hand is not free from wealth, the heart will not be free. It is for this reason that the poor person is more fearless. However, when he has accumulated wealth, he turns into a miser. As long as he is not (wealthy), his heart is free of that.

A turquoise goblet decorated with jewels was given to a king as a gift. There was no equal to it in the world. A sage was present. (The king) said: "O wise man! How dost thou see this goblet?" He replied: "I see it as a disaster in the company of deprivation. So long as thou didst not possess it, thou wert safe from both." "Why?" demanded (the king). "Because if it is broken, it would be a disaster that it no longer exists. If it is stolen, it would be deprivation and a craving until it came to hand again." Then it so happened that the goblet was accidentally smashed and that king became very distressed about that. He said: "The wise man spoke the truth."

¹²⁶⁴ "the world" (*kāy*): The Persian word indicates a town, village, quarter, district, or neighborhood. Metaphorically, it sometimes means "world" in a restrictive sense, as we are using it here. In modern Persian, it is used for a lane or a (usually planned) neighborhood. Perhaps the Spanish word *barrio*, for which there is no exact English equivalent, would correspond more to Ghazzali's usage here.

DISCLOSING THE INCANTATIONS OF WEALTH

Know that the likeness of wealth is that of a snake in which there is both poison and medicine, as we have said. Whoever does not know the incantation for the snake and seizes one in his hand will be destroyed. It is for this reason that it is not proper for someone to say: "Amongst the Companions, there were some who were rich, such as 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf (R) and the likes of him. Therefore, there is no fault in being rich." This is as though a child, seeing a magician who takes a snake in his hands and puts it in a basket, thinks that (the magician) picks it up because it is soft and feels good in his hands. He goes to pick it up too, and is suddenly killed.

THE INCANTATIONS OF WEALTH are five:

FIRST: That one know that for which wealth has been created. As we have said, it is for the provision of food, clothing, housing, and the necessities of the human body. The body is for the senses, and the senses are for the intellect, and the intellect is for the soul, so that it may be adorned with the spiritual knowledge of God Most High. When one has learned this, the soul becomes firm inside one according to one's objective and utilizes its wisdom in that objective.

SECOND: That one examine (one's) income so (to be sure) that it does not come from the forbidden, or from the doubtful, or is not earned in a manner in which virtue would be impugned—such as by bribery, begging, payment for cupping, or the like.

THIRD: That one watch the amount so that it does not exceed need. One should recognize that everything which is in excess of need—that which is not needed for preparing the provisions for the way of religion—is the right of the needy. Should a needy person appear, that which is superfluous to one's needs should not be withheld from him. If one does not have the power to be munificent, one should not stint in a time of need.

FOURTH: That one keep expenditures so they are not other than economical. One should be content with little and spend rightfully, for spending unrightfully is the same as earning unrightfully.

FIFTH: That one declare that the intention concerning income, expenditure, and saving be just and good. One should earn that which one earns for the comfort of the family. One should hold onto that which one holds onto for piety, for disdaining the world, and so that one's heart may be protected from concern about having (money) in order that one

may apply oneself to the remembrance of God Most High. That which is retained is kept for some important need in the way of religion and for facilitating the way of religion. One waits for the need in order to spend on it. When one does thus, wealth does one no injury and one's portion of wealth is a medicine, not a poison.

It was for this that 'Ali Murtada¹²⁶⁵ (R) said: "If a person obtains all the wealth on the face of the earth and gives it away in the way of God Most High, he is an ascetic, even though he be the richest of mankind. If he gives up everything, but not in the way of God Most High, he is not an ascetic.

Therefore the prayer-direction of the soul must be worship and the provision for the Hereafter so that every move one makes—if all is defecating or eating food—all are worship and one obtains spiritual reward for all of them, because the way of religion has need of all of them. The intention is what counts.¹²⁶⁶ Since most people are unable to do this and do not know these incantations and prescriptions, or they know them but are unable to implement them, it is preferable that they shun great wealth as much as possible. For, if an abundance of wealth does not carry them to hubris and negligence, still it will decrease their standing in the Hereafter. This would be a total loss.

When 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf received the command¹²⁶⁷ he left behind a vast wealth. Some of the Companions said: "We fear for him because of the great wealth that he has left." Ka'b Ahbar (R) said: "Glory be to God! What art thou afraid of? He obtained the wealth lawfully and expended it justly. What is there to fear?" The news was brought to Abu Dharr (R). He came out of his house angrily brandishing a camel bone. He leaped at Ka'b to hit him. Ka'b fled from him and went into the house of 'Uthman 'Affan and hid behind him. Abu Dharr entered and cried: "Have a care, O son of a Jew! Thou sayest: 'What is there to fear about that which 'Abd al-Rahman left behind?' The Messenger (S) was going to Uhud one day and I was with him. He said: 'O Abu Dharr!' I said: '*At thy service, O Messenger of God.*' He said: 'The rich are fewer and more turned back at the Resurrection, save those who strew and expend their money behind and before them and to their right and to their left. O Abu Dharr, I do not want to possess gold as much as Mount Uhud and spend all of it in the way of God Most High and have even two karats left at the time I die.' Thus spoke the Messenger and thou, son of a Jew, sayest that! Thou liest and thou art a liar!" He said that and no one replied to him.

¹²⁶⁵ 'Ali Murtadā: 'Ali the Approved, 'Ali bin Abi Talib, the son-in-law of the Prophet. See Note 395.

¹²⁶⁶ "the intention is what counts": lit., "the act has the intention" (*kār nīyat dārad*).

¹²⁶⁷ "received the command": died.

Once a caravan of camels belonging to 'Abd al-Rahman bin 'Awf (R) returned from trading in Yemen. Shouting and triumphs erupted in Madinah. 'Ayishah (R) asked: "What is going on?" She was told that it is the camels of 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf. She said: "The Messenger (S) spoke truly." 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf heard of what 'Ayishah had said. He worried about these words and immediately went to 'Ayishah (R) and said: "What did the Messenger say, O 'Ayishah?" She replied: "The Messenger said: 'Heaven was shown to me. I saw the poor of the Companions walking and running rapidly (into heaven), but I saw no rich person except 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf, who was not able to walk. He was crawling on his hands and feet until he entered heaven.'" 'Abd al-Rahman said: "O 'Ayishah, I have given away as charity those camels and all that they brought and that was loaded upon their backs. I have freed all of the slaves that accompanied the camels so that it may be that I too will be able to go with (the Companions into heaven)." And the Messenger (S) said to 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf: "The first of the wealthy of my people to enter will be thou, and thou wilt not be able to enter save by effort, stratagem, and crawling."

One of the great of the Companions says: "I do not wish to earn a thousand dinars a day lawfully and spend it in the way of God Most High, even if I am not prevented from performing the congregational obligatory formal prayers and fasting." He was asked why. He said: "So that at the place of questions and answers they not ask me: 'My servant, whence didst thou obtain it and for what didst thou spend it?' I would not have the strength to endure those questions and that reckoning."

The Messenger (S) said: "A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection whose property was earned from the unlawful and spent for the unlawful and he will be carried off to hell. Another will be brought who had accumulated his wealth unlawfully, but spent it lawfully. He will be sent to hell. Another will be brought who earned his wealth lawfully, but spent it unlawfully. He will be carried off to hell. Then a fourth will be brought who earned lawfully and spent lawfully and justly. It will be said: 'Hold this one, for it may be that in the quest for wealth, or in his purification, or his formal prayers, or in his bows or prostrations there is some shortcoming and they were not performed at the proper times or according to the rules.' He will say: 'O Lord, I earned from the lawful and I have not committed a fault in any religious obligation.' (The accuser) will say: 'Perhaps thou hadst a silken garment, a horse and luxury, and swaggered on the path of pride and self-glorification.' He will say: 'O Lord God, I have not omitted anything in any religious duty and I have not gloried in my wealth.' (The interrogator) will say: 'Perhaps thou hast committed some fault with respect to an orphan, a destitute person, a neighbor, or a relative.' He will say: 'O Lord God, I have gotten it from the lawful and I have spent it justly and I have not committed any fault in religious duties. I did not glory in this wealth, and

I have not committed a fault with anyone.' Then all those will come forward and contend with him, saying: 'O Lord God, amongst us Thou didst give him wealth and comfort. Ask him on our behalf.' Each one will be enquired about. If he has not committed any fault, they will say: 'Now it is necessary that thou bringest thanks for these blessings and for every morsel that thou atest and for every pleasure that thou obtainedst. Bring thanks for them!' In that way he will be questioned, he will be questioned..."

This was the reason that none of the saints desired wealth, for if there is no torment, there is the reckoning in that manner. Indeed, the Messenger (S), who is the exemplar of the people, chose poverty for that reason so that his people would know that poverty is better.

'Imran bin Hasin¹²⁶⁸ (R) says: "I had a familiar relationship with the Messenger (S). One day he said to me: 'Let us visit Fatimah.' We went and when we reached the door, he knocked and said: '*Peace be upon thee*, may we come in?' She said: 'Come in!' He said: "I and that person who is with me?" She said: 'O Messenger of God, I am not wearing anything on all of my body except an old coarse cloth.' He said: 'Cover thy head and wrap thyself with it.' She said: 'I have covered my body but my head is bare.' The Messenger (S) threw an old wrapper to her and she covered her head with it. Then they entered and he said: 'How art thou, my dear child?' She said: 'I am sick and in pain, and my misery is increased because I am hungry. As I am sick, I cannot find anything to eat. I do not have the strength to endure the hunger.' The Messenger (S) wept and said: 'Do not worry, Fatimah, for by God it has been three days since I ate anything, and I am more beloved by God Most High than thou. If I were to ask, He would give, but I have chosen the Hereafter over this world.' Then he placed his hand on her shoulder and said: 'I give thee good news: By God Most High, thou wilt be the mistress of the women of the inhabitants of Paradise.' She said: 'What about Asiyah the wife of Pharaoh and Mary the mother of Jesus?' He said: 'Each of them is the mistress of the women of her own world. Thou art the mistress of the women of thine own world, all of you in your quarters, adorned with fine linen. In that place, there shall be neither shouting, nor sorrow, nor labor.' Then he said: 'Let thy cousin and thy husband¹²⁶⁹ with whom I have joined thee suffice, for he is a master in this world and a master in the Hereafter.'"

It has been related that a man said to Jesus (A): "I wish to accompany thee." They set off together until (they reached) the bank of a

¹²⁶⁸ 'Imrān bin Ḥasīn: a Companion of the Prophet. He became a Muslim in AH7/628-9CE and became a scholar of religious law. 'Umar bin al-Khattab sent him to Basrah to instruct the people there and he earned the praise of Hasan al-Basri and Ibn Sirin. In the civil war between Mu'awiyah and 'Ali he was neutral, but tried to stop the fighting.

¹²⁶⁹ The husband of Fatimah was her cousin 'Ali bin Talib, who became the fourth caliph.

stream. They had three round loaves of bread and ate two of them. Then Jesus went down to the water's edge in order to purify himself. When he returned he did not see the bread. He said: 'Who took the bread?' (The man) said: "I do not know." So, they went from that place and (met) a doe coming with two fawns. Jesus (A) called to one of the fawns of that doe and it came to him. He slaughtered it immediately and roasted it. Both ate their fill. Then (Jesus) said: "O fawn, become alive again by the command of God Most High!" It came alive again and ran off. He said to that man: "By that God Who showed thee this miracle, tell me what happened to that bread." He said: "I do not know." They went away from that place and came upon a river. Jesus (A) took him by the hand and both of them walked on the water. (Jesus) said: "By that God Who has shown thee this miracle, tell me what happened to the bread." He said: "I do not know." They went away from that place and reached a place where there was much sand. Jesus (A) gathered that sand and said: "By the command of God, become gold!" All of the sand became gold. Then he divided it into three parts and said: "One portion is for me, one portion is for thee, and one portion is for him who has the bread." Greedy for the gold, the man confessed and said: "I have the bread." Jesus (A) said: "All three portions are thine." He left all three with him and departed.

Two men came upon that man and wanted to slay him and carry off the gold. He said: "Do not kill me so that each one may have a portion." Then they said: "Let us send one of us to buy some food." One of them went and bought food. He said to himself: "What a pity that they carry off that gold. I shall put poison in the food. When they eat it, they will die and I will take all of the gold." (Meanwhile) the other two were saying to each other: "For what reason must we give him the gold? When he comes back let us kill him and take his portion." When the other returned, they slew him and ate the poisoned food he had brought back and fell dead, but the gold remained. Then Jesus (A) passed by with his disciples. The gold was still where it had been left and the three men, slain and dead. He said: "O Companions, this world is thus! Beware of it!" So, from this story it is apparent that even if a man is a teacher and is resolute, it is better that he not look at wealth and that he not approach it, beyond the amount of need, for the end of a snake charmer is destruction from the snake. *Peace!*

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE TREATMENT OF THE LOVE FOR RANK AND RETINUE

Know that most of the people who have been brought to ruin have been in search of rank, retinue, good reputation, and popular praise. For that reason they have fallen into vying with one another, enmity, and many sins. When the passion for this has become dominant, the path of religion is cut off and the soul is tainted by hypocrisy and a treacherous character.¹²⁷⁰

The Messenger (S) said: "The love for rank and property causes hypocrisy to grow in the soul as water causes leaks to grow." And he (S) said: "Two hungry wolves in a flock of sheep do not wreak as much destruction as the love for wealth and rank in the soul of a Muslim man." And he (S) said to 'Ali (R): "People have been destroyed by two things: pursuing their lusts and their love for adulation. A person is liberated from these calamities who does not seek fame and is content with obscurity." For God Most High says: *The Last Abode; We have made that for those who desire not elevation on the earth nor corruption; the outcome for the god-fearing.* (Q. 28:83) (God) said: "We have set the happiness of the Hereafter for a person who does not seek greatness or rank in the world and does not seek corruption." The Messenger (S) said: "The inhabitants of heaven are those persons who carry no weight. If they request permission to enter houses, they are turned away. If they seek in marriage, none will give them his daughter. If they speak, no one listens to their words. (Yet) if the light of their countenances were divided among all mankind, they would (all) be saved on the Day of Resurrection."¹²⁷¹

And he (S) said: "Many a (person in a) dusty threadbare garment, if he were to swear by God and desire Paradise, would be granted that, but if he desired something from the world, he would not (be granted that). And he said: "There are many persons among my people to whom ye would not give a dirham or a grain if they asked it of you, but if they ask for Paradise from God Most High, He will give it to them. If they want some thing of this world, He will not give it, but it is not because of their humbleness that He will not give them the world."

¹²⁷⁰ "a treacherous character" (*khiyānat-i akhlāq*). AA has "a wicked character" (*khabīthat-i akhlīq*).

¹²⁷¹ AA gives a somewhat different version of this extraordinary tradition: "The inhabitants of heaven are dusty persons with disheveled hair and in dirty clothes; no one gives them any weight. If they seek permission to enter the mansions of princes, they are turned away. If they seek in marriage, none will give them his daughter. If they speak, no one listens to their words; yet, their aspirations foam and beat like waves in their breasts. If the light of their countenances were divided amongst all mankind, it would reach all." This is rather closer to the corresponding Arabic text in *The Revival*.

‘Umar entered a mosque. He saw Mu‘adh (R) weeping. (‘Umar) said: “Why art thou weeping, O Mu‘adh?” He answered: “I heard the Messenger (S) say: ‘A little of hypocrisy is polytheism and God Most High loves the unknown pious, for if they are absent, no one looks for them; if they are present, no one recognizes them. Their hearts are lamps for the path of Guidance and they have been delivered from all doubts and torments.” Ibrahim Adham (R) says: “Whoever loves appetite and good repute is not sincere in God’s religion.” Job (A) said: “The sign of sincerity is that one not desire anyone to know him.”

A group of Ubayy bin Ka‘b’s students were following him. ‘Umar (R) saw him and struck him with his scourge. (Ubayy) said “Look at what thou art doing, O Commander of the Believers!” (‘Umar) said: “This is a degradation for the follower and a temptation for the preceder.”¹²⁷² Hasan Basri (R) says: “In no manner can the heart of every fool who sees himself being followed (by admirers) remain true.”

Job (A) was on a journey with a crowd of people following him. He said: “If it were not that God Most High knows of me that I detest this, I would fear the anger of God.” Thawri (R) says: “The forefathers detested clothing which would be conspicuous, either for oldness or for newness. Rather, it should be that which does not cause anyone to comment about it.” Bishr Hafi (R) says: “I do not know anyone who likes people to recognize him whose religion does not become corrupt and who does not become disgraced.”

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF RANK

Behold, the meaning of being “rich”¹²⁷³ is that the chattels of wealth are one’s property, under one’s control, and in one’s power. The meaning of being “great” and “honored” is that the souls of people are one’s property. That is, they are subject to him and his control of them is lawful. When someone’s heart has become subject to another person, body and property follows that. The heart does not become subject to another until it has good faith in that person by which (that person’s) greatness enters into his soul because of the perfection that exists in him, either in knowledge, in worship, in good character, in strength, or some (other) thing which people consider perfection and greatness. When he has arrived at this belief, his heart is made subject and he has the desire to obey and adore him. He praises and lauds him with his tongue and lends his body to his service. He is determined to sacrifice wealth for him so that, just as a slave is subject to his owner, the disciple and the friend are subservient to the honored one. Moreover, the subservience of the

¹²⁷² That is, it is humiliating for those following him and a temptation or a seduction for the soul of the person who is followed, perhaps leading him to arrogance and pride.

¹²⁷³ “rich”: the Persian word *tawāngar* means “rich, wealthy, great, powerful.”

slave is by compulsion, but *his* subservience is by (voluntary) obedience and nature. Therefore, the meaning of wealth is the possession of its chattels and the meaning of rank is the possession of the hearts of the people.

Rank is more beloved than wealth to most of mankind for three reasons:

ONE is that wealth is loved because all needs may be fulfilled with it, and it is the same for rank. Indeed, obtaining wealth becomes easy for whoever obtains rank. However, if a base person desires to obtain rank through wealth, it is difficult.

THE SECOND is that wealth is susceptible to destruction. A thief may carry it away, or it may be used and exhausted, but rank is secure from all of these.

THE THIRD is that wealth does not increase without the pains of trade and agriculture, while rank spreads and increases. For, whoever's heart has become captivated by thee roams the world and speaks thy praises so that others too become captivated without seeing (thee). However much thy name becomes more famous, (thy) rank increases and that which follows from that increases. So, both rank and wealth are desirable because they are the means (of fulfilling) all needs, but it is imbued in human nature that one desires that his fame and rank reach faraway cities, even though he knows that he himself will never go to those parts. He desires that the entire world be his property, even though he knows that he will never have need of it. This is a great mystery. Its cause is that humanity is of the essence of angels and one of the divine works, as He said: *Say: The Spirit is by the command of my Lord.* (Q. 17:85) Therefore, because of the excess of the relationship (the soul) has with the Divine Presence, seeking divinity is its nature. In everyone's inner being there is that inside which Pharaoh said: "*I am your Lord Most High!*" (Q. 79:24) Thus, everyone naturally loves divinity.

The meaning of "divinity" is that it is everything and there is nothing else with it. For if another appears, there is an imperfection (in its absoluteness). The perfection of the sun is that it is one, and all light comes from it. If there were another with it, (the sun) would (necessarily) be imperfect.¹²⁷⁴ The perfection of its uniqueness is (also) a characteristic of divinity, for it is true existence and nothing else. There is no other in existence with it, other than it. All that is, is the illumination of its power; therefore (divinity) depends upon Him, and is not with Him; just as the light of the sun is dependent upon the sun and the light is not another

¹²⁷⁴ "imperfect": that is, the existence of another sun would detract from its perfect or absolute singularity.

entity with respect to the sun and is (co-existent) with it together. Its¹²⁷⁵ appearance would be an imperfection (in the sun).

There is this in the nature of a human being that requires him to desire that he be everything. Since he is incapable of this, he desires that everything be his; that is, that everything be subservient to him and under his control and (subject to) his will. However, he is incapable of achieving this also, for there are two kinds of existing things:

ONE KIND is that which the control of man does not touch, such as the heavens, stars, the substances of the angels and the devils, and that which is beneath the earth, at the depths of the oceans, and under mountains. Therefore, man desires to conquer all of these through knowledge so that they come under the control of his knowledge, even though they are not in his power. For this reason, he desires that the kingdoms of heaven and earth, the wonders of the land and sea, all be made known, just as a person who is incapable of arranging the chess pieces, but wishes in all events to know how they have been placed, for this too is a kind of mastery.

THE SECOND KIND is that over which a person may gain control: the surface of the earth and all that it is on it of plants, animals, and minerals. A person desires that all (of that) be his property; that is, under his control so that he may have the perfection of power and dominion over all. And, of all the things upon the earth, the most valuable are the people's souls.¹²⁷⁶ He desires that they to be the place of his control so that they will always be engaged in remembering him. The meaning of rank is this.

So, a human being, by his nature, loves the divinity that they attribute to him and it is from this that "presence" comes.¹²⁷⁷ The meaning of divinity is that all perfection is his. Perfection lies in mastery, and all of mastery comes through knowledge and power. The power of a person is through wealth and rank. Therefore, the cause of his love for these lies in that.

EXCURSUS: [THE PEOPLE IN QUEST OF RANK TRAVEL THE PATHWAY OF LOSS]

If a person says that since the quest for the perfection of divinity is human nature, and that is not possible save with knowledge and power,

¹²⁷⁵ "its": the light's appearance as a separate entity.

¹²⁷⁶ "souls" (*dil-hā*): or, "hearts."

¹²⁷⁷ In this passage, Al-Ghazzali is likening human ambition for mastery and rule to a desire for divinity. The term "presence" (*ḥadrat*) is intended to remind the reader of "the divine presence," although it is also applied to exalted humans.

and that seeking knowledge is laudable for it is the seeking for perfection, then, the quest for rank and wealth must also be laudable, for that too is a quest for power, and power is also a part of perfection and of the attributes of God, as is knowledge. The more perfect the servant (of God), the nearer he is to God Most High.

The reply to this is that knowledge and power, both are perfections and of the attributes of divinity. However, there is a way for a person to true knowledge, but there is not a way to true power. Knowledge is a perfection that it may be possible for a person to acquire and then to retain. However, power is not acquired. Rather, one thinks that it has been acquired, but then it does not stay with a person. For, power is dependent upon wealth and people, and it will be cut off from him at death. Whatever is invalidated by death is not a part of the Lasting Good Deeds.¹²⁷⁸ Spending time in the quest for such things is ignorance.

Therefore, that amount of power is useful that is the means of acquiring knowledge. Knowledge is (acquired) by the application of the soul, not the body, and the soul endures and is everlasting. When a savant departs from this world, the knowledge remains (with him). That knowledge is his light by which he sees the Divine Presence so as to obtain the pleasure (in comparison) to which all of the other pleasures of Paradise fall short. Knowledge has no dependency upon anything that will be voided at death, for neither wealth nor the hearts of people are attached to knowledge. Rather, it is the essence of God Most High. His attributes, His wisdom in the dominion and the kingdom, and the wonders of the probabilities in the possible, the necessary, and the impossible. For, they are timeless and eternal. They never change because the necessary never becomes impossible; nor the impossible, possible. However, knowledge that is connected with created, transitory things has no weight, such as, for example, the knowledge of language. For language is created and transitory, its weight is that it is the means of knowing the Book¹²⁷⁹ and the Practice (of the Prophet). Knowing the Book and the Practice is knowing God Most High and the cutting away of the obstacles on the path to Him.

Therefore, knowledge of whatever is susceptible to change and annihilation is not the object. Rather, it is subordinate to the knowledge of Eternity without beginning.¹²⁸⁰ The knowledge of Eternity without beginning is one of the Lasting Good Works and (a part) of the Divine Presence, which is eternal without beginning and eternal without end.

¹²⁷⁸ "lasting good deeds" (*bāqiyāt-i ṣāliḥāt*): i.e., good deeds with the eternal effect of a spiritual reward in the afterlife.

¹²⁷⁹ "the Book": The Holy Quran.

¹²⁸⁰ "knowledge of Eternity without a beginning" (*ʿilm-i azaliyāt*): the knowledge of that which is infinite without beginning or commencement: knowledge of the timeless; divine knowledge.

and unaffected by change. So, the more a person knows about Eternity, the nearer he approaches God Most High. He truly has knowledge, but he does not truly have power, except one kind of power, that which is one of the Lasting Good Works: that is freedom; being freed from the power the carnal appetites. Whoever has become a prisoner of appetite is its slave. There will be some defect in whatever need he has because of it. Consequently, being liberated from that need and overpowering one's appetites is a perfection that is close to the attributes of God Most High and the attributes of the angels, in this respect: by reason of its being farther from change, alteration, and need, and its resembling more the angels. Therefore, true perfection is knowledge and spiritual insight, and also freedom from the power of the appetites.

As for wealth and rank, they display perfection but are not (perfect). Moreover, they do not endure after death. Therefore, people searching for perfection are excused. Indeed, they are commanded to do that, but they are ignorant of true perfection. They suppose to be perfection that which is not perfection. They have all turned their attention to that and have turned their backs on that which is (true) perfection. And so, they all travel the road to their own detriment. God Most High as said about this: *By the afternoon! Surely, man is in the way of loss.* (Q. 103:1-2)

EXCURSUS: [AN ADEQUATE AMOUNT OF RANK IS NOT BLAMEWORTHY]

Know that rank is like wealth. Just as all wealth is not blameworthy—indeed, an adequate amount of that is the provision for the Hereafter, while an excess of that, so that the soul becomes absorbed in it, is a highwayman on the road to the Hereafter. It is the same for rank. A person cannot escape having someone who serves him, a friend who assists him, or a ruler who protects him from oppressors. He must certainly have some esteem in the hearts of these people. The quest for rank in the hearts of these people for that which will allow him to achieve his objectives is lawful, as Joseph (A) said: *"I am a good keeper, knowing well."* (Q. 12:55)

In the same way, a teacher will not instruct someone until he has some value in (the teacher's) heart, or a student will not learn from him until (the teacher) has (esteem) in (the student's) heart. Therefore, seeking an adequate amount of rank is permitted as is seeking an adequate amount of wealth; however, rank may be sought in four ways, two of which are forbidden and two allowed:

As for the two ways that are forbidden, one is that one seek rank by ostentatious acts of worship. This is hypocrisy. Worship should be purely for God. To seek rank and honor by means of that is forbidden. The second is that one be fraudulent and display oneself to the public in a character one does not possess. One says, for example: "I am a

descendant of 'Ali," or "So-and-so is of my lineage," or "I know such-and-such a craft," while one does not know it. All of this is as though he were seeking wealth fraudulently.

As for the two ways that are lawful, one is that one seek something without using false pretense or acts of worship. The other is that one conceal one's own defect, so that if one is a sinner, one conceals the sin so that he may have some office from the sovereign, not so that (the sovereign) suppose that he is an ascetic. This too is allowed.

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT FOR THE LOVE OF RANK

Know that the love for rank, when it dominates the soul, is an illness of the soul and requires treatment. For it shall certainly lead to hypocrisy, dissimulation, lies, false pretenses, enmity, envy, competition, and many sins; just as does the love for wealth. Indeed, it is worse, for it masters human nature.

A person who seeks wealth and rank in that amount in which the soundness of his religion lies and who does not desire more than that is not ill, for in reality he does not love wealth and rank; rather, he loves the leisure for the works of religion. But for a person who naturally loves rank and whose every thought is absorbed by how the people view him, what they say about him, and what they believe about him—whatever happens, his mind is with them to learn what people are saying (about him)—the treatment of this illness is a religious obligation. Its treatment is made up theory and practice:

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL, it is that one reflect upon the harm of rank to religion and the world. In the world, he who is constantly seeing rank is in the trouble and wretchedness of considering the opinions of the public.¹²⁸¹ If he does not achieve rank, he remains abject. If he achieves it, he becomes a target and an object of envy. He will always be in the pain of enmity and fending off the attacks of his enemies. He is not safe from their tricks and treacheries. If one who is not free from attack is vanquished in some litigation, he himself will be humiliated. If he triumphs, there is no permanence in (his triumph), for rank is all dependent upon the hearts of the public, and the hearts of people change quickly: they are like the waves of the sea. A weak person may have a power which is founded upon the hearts of a few inconstant persons who may change that power at a whim, especially a person whose rank is governance and susceptible to dismissal. With a single suspicion that appears in the heart of the ruler, he will be dismissed and humiliated.

¹²⁸¹ Like the modern politician who is obsessed with polls.

So, the seeker for rank is in distress in both this world and the Hereafter. All these weaklings cannot understand that. However, a person who himself possesses clear vision knows that if the kingdom of the face of the earth from east to west be his in certainty and unconditionally, and all its inhabitants prostrate themselves before him, it is not worth that delight, for when he dies, all of that will vanish, so that after a time, neither will he remain nor those who prostrated themselves before him, as the sultan who, when he is dead, is not remembered by anyone. Then, for a few days of pleasure, he has brought (his) eternal kingship to ruin.

The love for God Most High has departed from the soul of whoever has set his heart upon rank. When he goes to the other world with his love for God Most High overwhelmed by something else, his torment will be lengthy. The theoretic treatment is that which has been stated.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL TREATMENTS, they are two: one is to flee from the place where one has his rank and go to another place where no one knows him. This is more complete, for if he goes into seclusion in his own town, when the people find out that he has abandoned his office, it will change into some evil for him. The sign of this is that if they criticize him or say that he is dissimulating, grief and sorrow will appear in his heart. If he is accused of some crime, he (must) offer an apology, even though (the accusation) was a lie so that people not have a bad opinion about him. All of this demonstrates that the love for rank is still present (in him).

The other treatment is that one resort to the way of reproach and do something so as to fall away from the people's notice; not that he should eat of the unlawful—as do some corrupt fools do who call themselves “the reproached”¹²⁸²—but as, for example, an ascetic (did) in the olden days. The prince of the city came to greet him and give him gifts. When the prince came into view in the distance, the ascetic called for bread and leeks and began to eat rapidly in big bites. When the prince saw that he was so greedy, he lost faith in him and turned away.

Another found acceptance in a city and the people thronged to him. One day he emerged from the bathhouse having put on a fine garment belonging to a person who was in the bath. He came out and stood on a public thoroughfare in such a manner that he was seized and

¹²⁸² “the reproached” (*malāmati*): persons who, in order to conceal their state from people, went to great lengths to hide their pious observances and acts of worship so that they would approach God more closely. As a part of this deception, their public behavior was such that people would reproach and rebuke them. They would not make a parade of anything good and would not hide anything bad. (Steingass: *malamati*; K.Kh., note Vol. II, p. 199.)

beaten and the clothing taken away from him. They said that he was a thief. Another colored lawful drink in a goblet the color of wine and drank it, so that they would think he was drinking wine. These and their like are the treatment to crush the greed for rank.

**DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT FOR THE LOVE OF EULOGY AND
PRAISE BY THE PEOPLE AND THE DISLIKE OF THE THEIR CENSURE**

Know that there is the person who is eager for the praise of the people and is continually seeking good repute, even though it be in some matter that is contrary to the Law. They dislike the public's rebuke, even though it be for an act that is just. This, too, is a sickness of the soul and its treatment will not be known so long as the cause of the pleasure and pain of the soul in praise and reproach does not become known.

Know that there are four reasons for the pleasure of praise:

THE FIRST REASON is that which we have said, that a human loves his own perfection and dislikes his own diminishment. Praise denotes perfection. It may be that he has some doubt concerning his own perfection and this pleasure is incomplete. When he hears (praise) from someone, he becomes certain (of his perfection), so that his soul comes to crave and be calmed by it. It becomes an absolute pleasure. When he has smelled the perfume of his own perfection, the effect of supreme power appears in himself, and supreme power is naturally loved. But, when he hears reproaches, he becomes aware of his own deficiency and for that reason becomes upset.

So, if one hears praise and rebukes from a person who is knowledgeable—as from a fair, learned teacher—and it is not exaggeration, one necessarily becomes more aware of sorrow and ease. But, when it is spoken by someone lacking in perspicacity, it does not have that pleasure, because certainty does not come from his words.

THE SECOND REASON is that praise demonstrates that the heart of the speaker is one's property and subservient to one, and that in (the praiser's) heart there is a place and honored rank for the man. Rank is beloved, so if the praise comes from some grandee, the pleasure is greater, as the power of possessing his heart is more complete, but if it comes from a base person, there is no pleasure in it.

THE THIRD REASON is that praise may be the glad tidings that one will ensnare other hearts. For, when someone offers (him) praise, others too will have good faith in him and this will spread. So, if the praise is public and from a person whose words are accepted (by the public), the pleasure is greater. Censure (in public) has the opposite (effect).

THE FOURTH REASON is that it shows that one has conquered the praiser because of his magnificence, and magnificence is also beloved, even if it be by compulsion. For even though he knows that (the praiser) does not believe that which he says, he likes (the fact) of the praiser's need to praise him and he considers it a part of the perfection of his power. Therefore, if one is praised for something that one knows to be a lie that no one would accept, and that it is said neither from the heart nor out of fear, but rather in ridicule; no pleasure will remain (from that), for all of the (above) reasons are absent.

Now that thou hast learned these reasons, thou wilt easily know the treatment; if thou makest the effort, thou wilt be able:

AS FOR THE FIRST REASON, the which we said, that at his words thou believest in thine own perfection, (the treatment is) that thou must reflect that if the traits which he is describing, such as knowledge and piety, are correct, thou shouldst take delight in those traits and in that God Who gave them to thee, not in thine eulogizer's words, for they will not be increased or diminished by anyone's words.

If thou art praised for thy wealth, lordship, or worldly goods, they themselves are not worth thy rejoicing. If they had value, one should rejoice in that thou wert given these things, not in the encomium. Indeed, a wise person, even though he knows his own knowledge and piety, does not rejoice (for that), out of the fear of the End, which is unknown. So long as that is not known, all of this is wasted.

For a person whose place will be in hell, what cause for joy is there for him? If one knows that one does not possess that attribute—such as knowledge or piety—rejoicing (in praise for that) is foolishness. One is like him to whom someone says: "This lord is a rare man and all the contents of his bowels are perfumed and fragrant," while he knows that they are filled with filth, and yet he takes delight in this lie! This is insanity itself!

AS FOR THE OTHER REASONS, their outcome is the love for rank and retinue, and the treatment for this has been discussed.

However, if a person rebukes one, his becoming saddened by and angry with (that person) is also done out of ignorance. For, if he speaks the truth, he is angel. If he lies and one knows that he is lying, he is a devil. If he does not know that he is uttering lies, he is an ass and a fool. As God Most High transforms a person into an ass, or a devil, or an angel, why shouldst thou be saddened? Therefore, if he speaks the truth, thou shouldst be saddened by the deficiency that is in thee. If the deficiency is religious, it is not (a result) of his words. If it is worldly, that to the religious is a virtue, not a defect!

Another treatment is that thou consider that that which he has said is not devoid of three conditions: If he speaks the truth and has spoken with kindness, one should be grateful to him. For, if a person informs thee that there is a snake in thy clothing, so that thou beware of it, thou art grateful. The defect which is in (thy) religion is worse than a snake, for it may be cause of thy ruin in the Hereafter. If thou goest to a king and someone says to thee: "O wearer of dirty clothes, sit and clean thy clothing," thou wouldst look (at it). The clothing is full of impurities. If thou hadst gone before the king in that condition, thou wouldst be in danger of being punished. Thou must be grateful to that person, for he has saved thee from that danger. But, if he is finding fault, thou also obtainest a benefit, just as if he had spoken the truth. His faultfinding is a betrayal of his own faith. So, when there is a benefit for thee and harm to him, thine anger is not required.

However, if he has spoken a lie, thou must reflect that if thou art free of this defect, thou hast many other defects which he does not know. Therefore, thou shouldst thank him profusely, for God Most High has dropped a veil over thine other defects and that person has presented thee with his own good deeds.¹²⁸³ If he had praised thee, it would have been the same as his killing thee. Why shouldst thou rejoice at being killed and be saddened by (his) gift (of the merit of his good deeds)? A person does this who sees appearances, not the essence, the spirit, and the truth. Whoever possesses intelligence is separated from the fools by this, for he sees the truth and spirit of affairs, not their appearance and form. In short, so long as greed for (good opinion of) people is not cut off, this illness will not depart from the soul.

DISCLOSING THE DIFFERENT DEGREES OF PEOPLE CONCERNING PRAISE AND BLAME

Know that when listening to their praises, men are divided into four degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is the general population. They delight in praise and express their gratitude (for it). They become angry at rebuke and engage in retaliation for it. This is the worst of the degrees.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the degree of the abstemious, who half-rejoice at praise and become angry at reproach, but they do not expose it in action. They hold both equal, but in their hearts, they like one and resent the other.

¹²⁸³ When a person lies about another, the spiritual reward due the liar in the Hereafter for his good deeds is transferred to the victim of his lies, as Ghazzali has pointed out several times above.

THE THIRD DEGREE is the degree of the pious who hold both (praise and reproach) the same, both in their hearts and in their words. They do not take any umbrage at reproach, nor are they excessive in their reception of the eulogizer, for their hearts do not pay attention to praise, nor are they moved by reproach. This is a great degree.

Some devout persons suppose that they have achieved this degree, but they suppose wrongly. The sign of this (degree) is that if a detractor remains with them for a long time, they do not feel a weight in their hearts greater than they feel with a praiser. If he comes more infrequently, the seeking and longing in the heart for him is not less than that for the praiser. If they summon him in some matter, his assistance is not more difficult than that of a praiser. If he dies, their sadness at his death is not less than at the death of another. If he is caused trouble by someone, they are troubled for him as they would be for the praiser. If the praiser commits an error, it must not be taken more lightly. This is extremely difficult. It may happen that a devout person flatter himself and say: "My anger is because he is a rebel (against God) for this aspersion which he has cast!"

This is the deception of Satan, for in fact there are many persons who commit major sins and cast aspersions on others when they do not find that (particular) repugnance in themselves. This is the proof that it is the anger of the self, not the (righteous) anger of faith. Most of the efforts (in piety) of an ascetic who is ignorant of these niceties is wasted.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is the degree of the truly righteous who hold the eulogizer to be an enemy and the reproacher a friend because three benefits are gotten from (the latter): one is that they hear from him their own shortcomings, another is that he sends them (the spiritual reward of) his own good deeds as a gift, and (third), he has made them avid to seek purification from that fault and from those things which resemble it.

In the Traditions, it is related that the Messenger (S) said: "Woe unto the faster and unto him who performs formal prayers at night, and unto him who wears woollen cloth, except for him who has cut himself off from the world. He hates praise and loves the detractor."

This Tradition, if it be correct, is a difficult affair. For, attaining this degree is a hard task and very arduous. Indeed, attaining the second degree—which is not superficially different in appearance, even though it is different in the soul—is also difficult, for most often when something occurs, one inclines to a disciple or a eulogizer, and also in transactions.

No one will attain the last degree except a person who has exercised hostility against his own self, which has become his own enemy. When he hears his defect from someone, he rejoices at that and has faith in the astuteness and intelligence of that person, just as a person

who hears of the defects of his enemy rejoices at that. However, this is rare. Indeed, should a person strive his entire life to hold an equal opinion of both his praiser and his detractor, it would still be difficult to be able to achieve that.

Know that the dangerous aspect of this is in that when a division appears between praising and reproaching, the desire for praise becomes strong in the heart and stratagems are devised for that. It may be that one begin to worship for show, and if one can achieve something through sin, one sins. The fact that the Messenger (S) said: “Woe unto the faster! Woe unto the performer of formal prayer! Let this be said: so long as its root is not pulled out of the soul, one quickly falls into sinning.”

However, disliking censure and liking true praise about oneself is not forbidden, so long as it does not lead to corruption, but it is very rare that it does not do so. Most of the people’s sins come from praise and criticism. All of people’s concern has come from doing everything for public opinion. When this dominates, it leads to unseemly acts, but if not, holding to the hearts of the people and paying attention to that—if it be not in the way of hypocrisy—is not forbidden.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE TREATMENT OF HYPOCRISY IN ACTS OF DEVOTION AND WORSHIP

Know that hypocrisy in acts of devotion to God Most High is among the major sins and close to ascribing partners to God. There is no illness in the souls of the devout more common than this. For, when they perform an act of worship they desire that people learn of it and, in short, believe in their devoutness. When the object of an act of worship is the confidence of people, it is not itself worship. It is the worship of people, and that is ascribing partners to God and making another a partner of God Most High in one's own worship.

God Most High says thus: *For whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do good deeds and make none a partner in the worship of his Lord, the One.* (Q. 18:110) Say to whoever hopes to see God Most High: do not ascribe partners to God in (thy) worship. And God Most High says: *So woe unto those performing the formal prayers who are heedless of their prayer, who would be seen (at worship) yet refuse small kindnesses!* (Q. 107:4-7) Woe unto those who perform their formal prayer inattentively and hypocritically.

Someone asked the Messenger (S): In what does salvation lie?" He replied: "In that thou keep thy devotion to God Most High and do not dissimulate with the people." And he (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, a person will be brought out and asked: 'What act of devotion dost thou have?' He will answer: 'I sacrificed my life in the way of God Most High and was slain in a battle in defense of Islam.' God Most High will say: 'Thou liest! Thou didst that so it would be said that such-and-such a man is manly.' He will say: 'Take him to hell!' Another will be brought out and he will be asked: 'What act of devotion dost thou have?' He will say: 'All that I had I gave away in charity.' God Most High will say: 'Thou liest! Thou didst that so that it would be said that such-and-such a man is generous. Seize him and carry him off to hell.' Another will be brought out and asked: 'What act of devotion dost thou have?' He will say: 'I learned knowledge and the Quran and suffered great deprivation and I taught the people.' He will say: 'Thou liest! Thou didst learn so that the people would say such-and-such a man is learned. Seize him and carry him off to hell!'"

And the Messenger (S) said: "I fear nothing for my people as much as the greatest ascription of partners." They asked: "What is that, O Messenger of God?" He replied: "That is hypocrisy." [And he (S) said:] "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High shall say: 'O hypocrites! Go to those persons whom ye worshipped and seek your reward from them!'"

And he (S) said: "Seek refuge with God Most High from the Cave of Sorrow."¹²⁸⁴ They asked: "O Messenger of God, what is the Cave of Sorrow?" He replied: "A valley in hell, made for reciters of the Quran¹²⁸⁵ and the hypocrites." And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'Whoever has performed an act of worship and made another a partner with Me—I Who am without need for a partner or companion—I have presented to that companion.'" Mu'adh (R) was weeping. 'Umar (R) asked: "Why art thou weeping?" He replied: "I heard the Messenger (S) say: 'A little bit of hypocrisy is the (same as) the ascription of partners with God.'"

And he (S) said: "The hypocrite shall be called and summoned on the Day of Resurrection: 'O hypocrite! O wicked one! O traitor! Thy deeds have been wasted and thy reward canceled; go and seek thy wages from that person for whom thou didst work!'"

Shaddad bin Uways¹²⁸⁶ (R) said: "I saw the Messenger (S) weeping. I asked him why he was weeping. He answered: 'I fear that my people ascribe partners to God—not that they worship idols, or worship the moon or the sun—but that they perform acts of worship in hypocrisy and dissimulation.'"

And he (S) said: "In the shadow of the Throne on the day when there will be no shade except the shadow of the Throne, there will be none other than the man who gives charity with his right hand and hides it from the left hand."¹²⁸⁷

And he (S) said: "When God Most High created the earth it trembled. He created the mountains to settle it. The angels said: 'Thou hast not created anything stronger than the mountains.' Then, God Most High created iron to cut through the mountains. They said: 'Iron is stronger.' God Most High created fire to melt iron. They said: 'Fire is stronger.' Then, He commanded the water to extinguish the fire. Then, He commanded the wind to raise the water from its place. Then, the angels fell into dispute and they said: 'Let us ask God Most High: 'What is the strongest thing Thou hast created, than which there is nothing stronger?' He said: 'The man who gives charity with his right hand so that his left hand has no knowledge of that. I have created no creature stronger than he.'"

¹²⁸⁴ "Cave of Sorrow": *Jubb al-Huzn*.

¹²⁸⁵ "reciters of the Quran" (*qurrāʾān*): See Note 316.

¹²⁸⁶ Shaddād bin Uways: He was a Helper from the (Jewish) tribe of Khazraj. A scholar and noted for his piety, he was appointed governor of Hims in Syria by 'Umar bin Khattab. Retiring after the murder of 'Uthman, he died in Jerusalem AH57/677CE.

¹²⁸⁷ With respect to this and the following tradition, see the words ascribed to Jesus (A) in Matthew 6:3-4: "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what the right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly."

Mu'adh (R) says that Messenger (S) said: "God, may He be honored and glorified, created seven angels before creating the heavens. Then, he created the heavens and appointed each one of them to a heaven and made each the gatekeeper of that heaven. When the angels of the earth who record the deeds of mankind—they are called the Rememberers¹²⁸⁸—transmit the deeds performed by each one of (God's) servants from morning to evening to the first heaven and greatly praise his acts of devotion, how much worship he has performed the light of which is like the light of the sun, that angel who is appointed at the gate of the heaven of the world says: 'Throw this devotion back in his face, for I am the watchman of the backbiters. God Most High has commanded me not to allow the deeds of anyone who backbites to pass.' Another deed, of one who has not spoken ill of others, is brought up and reaches the second heaven. That angel says: 'Throw this back in his face, for he did it for the world and to lord it over people in the public assemblies. I have been commanded to prevent (the entry) of any deeds performed for the world and for self-glorification.' Then another deed is brought up in which there is charity, fasting, and formal prayer. And the Rememberers remained in astonishment at its luminosity. When it comes to the third heaven, that angel says: 'I am appointed over pride and I interdict the deeds of the proud. He behaved arrogantly with the people.' Then, another deed is brought up, passing to the fourth heaven. That angel says: 'I am appointed over conceit. His deed is not free of vanity. I shall not permit his deed to pass by me.'

"Then, the deed of another is brought up to the fifth heaven, and the beauty of that deed is as a bride who will submit to her husband. That angel says: 'Take this deed and throw it back in his face and place it upon his neck, for I am appointed over envy, and he would envy anyone whose accomplishment and knowledge had reached his level.' Then, another deed is brought up and was not stopped until it reached the sixth heaven. That angel says: 'Throw this deed back into his face, for he showed no mercy upon anyone who had been afflicted or made sorrowful. Rather, he would rejoice! I am the angel of mercy. I have been commanded to stop the deeds of the unmerciful.' Then another deed is brought up. Its light is as brilliant as the sun. Its noise falls upon the heavens like a peal of thunder—so great it is!—no angel would be able to stop it! When it reaches the seventh heaven, the angel who is the guardian of the seventh heaven says: 'Throw this deed back into his face and put a lock upon his soul, for he did not seek God Most High with this deed. Rather, his purpose was glory among the learned and fame in the

¹²⁸⁸ "Rememberers" (*hafazah*): An Arabic plural of *hāfiz* meaning "keeper, preserver, rememberer, guard, custodian." A person who has memorized the entire Quran is also called a *hāfiz*.

cities. All that is like that is hypocrisy. God Most High does not accept the hypocrite.

"Then, another deed is brought up and it passes through to the seventh heaven. In it, there is good nature, remembrance, glorification (of God), and many kinds of acts of worship. All of the angels of the heavens go with that act of worship to the Presence of God Most High and all testify that the deed is pure and sincere. God Most High says: 'Ye are the guardians of his knowledge and deeds, and I am the Guardian of his soul. He did not do this deed for My sake. There was another intention in his heart. My curse upon him, I Who am God!' The angels say: 'Thy curse and ours, too.' And the heavens and all who are in them say: 'May he be accursed.'"

There are many other Traditions about hypocrisy like these.

As for the Non-Prophetic Traditions, 'Umar (R) saw a man with his head bowed; that is, "I am a pious man." ('Umar) said: "O lord of the crooked neck! Straighten thy neck, for humility is in the soul, not in the neck." Abu Imamah¹²⁸⁹ (R) saw someone weeping in the mosque while he was in the position of prostration. (Abu Imamah) said: "If thou wouldst have done at home that which thou art doing in the mosque, who would have come to thee?" 'Ali (R) says: "A hypocrite has three signs: when alone he is lazy, but when he sees people, he becomes energetic; when he is praised, he increases his work; and when he is rebuked, he does less."

Someone said to Sa'id Musayyab (R): "A person gives wealth for the sake of God Most High's reward and for the praise of mankind. What dost thou say?" He said: "Dost thou wish that God Most High take him as His enemy?" (The other) said: "No." (Sa'id) said: "When he does something it must not be for other than God Most High." 'Umar (R) struck someone with his scourge. He said: "Come, retaliate against me and hit me." (The other) said: "I forgive (the blow), for thee and for God." ('Umar) said: "That will not do! Either forgive me so that I know what is due, or forgive it to God alone without partnership." He said: "I have forgiven it to God without partnership."

Fudayl 'Iyad says: "There was a time when they dissimulated in what they did and now they dissimulate in what they have not done." Qatadah (R) says that when a servant (of God) dissimulates, God Most High says to the angels: "Look how that (My) servant mocks Me!"

DISCLOSING THE ACTS BY WHICH THEY DISSIMULATE

Know that the true nature of hypocrisy is that one display himself to people as pious in order to embellish himself for them, and to

¹²⁸⁹ Abu Imamah: See Note 1211.

gain acceptance in their hearts so that they will respect, accept, revere, and admire him. This is by means of displaying and showing to them those things that are the evidence of asceticism and greatness in religion. These are of five kinds:

THE FIRST KIND is physical appearance, such as making the face yellowish so that it is supposed that he has not slept that night, or keeping oneself thin as though he were engaged in great spiritual exercises, or having a gloomy visage so that it be thought that he has become thus from anxiety about religion, or uncombed hair so that it be thought that he does not have time to remember himself, or by speaking slowly and not raising his voice so that it be supposed that that is the humility of religion in his soul, or he has dry lips so that it be thought that he is keeping the fast. When this is a cause of people's opinion (of him), there is a quenching and delight in this exhibition for his ego. It is for this reason that Jesus (A) said: "When a person is fasting, he must comb his hair and rub oil in it and moisten his lips with oil and put collyrium around his eyes so that no one know that he is fasting."

THE SECOND KIND is hypocrisy in dress, as when one wears woolen, coarse, short, dirty, and ragged garments so that it will be thought that he is an ascetic. Or, (he goes about with) blue clothes, a prayer rug, and the tatters of the Sufis, so that it will be supposed that he is a Sufi, even though he has none of the spirituality of a Sufi. Or, he covers his turban with a cloth and wears leather slippers so that it be thought that he is very careful about obligatory purity, while he is not. Or, he wears the long robe (of the scholars) and a shawl so that it be thought that he is a learned person, while he is not.

The hypocrites in dress are of two kinds: One group seeks acceptance among the common folk. They always seek and wear old and torn clothing. If someone importunes and obliges them to wear a garment of fine linen or fur, or something which is lawful, it is harder on him than the agony of death, because then people would say that he had turned back from asceticism.

Others seek acceptance both among the common folk and also among rulers and lords. If they wear old clothing, they would be held in contempt by the rulers; if they dress up, they would be held in contempt by the common folk. Therefore, they try to get hold of nicely decorated wrappers¹²⁹⁰ and garments of fine wool, clothing of the color that the righteous wear, so that the common people will not notice it, but the value of the clothing will be that of the garments of the rich and powerful

¹²⁹⁰ "wrappers" (*fūṭah-hā*): large rectangles of cloth wrapped about the body. They can be used as garments; smaller sizes are used for modesty in the public baths.

so that rulers will not look upon them with contempt. If thou tellest one of these folk to put on clothing of fur or linen, even though its cost is less than his wrapper, it will be more difficult for him than the tearing out of his soul.

That fool, since he looks continually at himself, cannot don those garments which are lawful and which the pious have had. He does not even know this much: that by doing this, he worships the people! Moreover, it may be that he realizes this—but does not care.

THE THIRD KIND of hypocrisy is in speech. One moves his lips so that it be thought that he never rests from remembering (God). He may be remembering (God); but if he should want to do so without moving his lips, he would be unable. For, he fears that then the people would not know that he is reciting remembrances (of God). Though he chastises (others for religious offenses) in public, in private he commits the like (offenses). Or, he memorizes the incoherences and jargon of the Sufis so that it would be thought that he knows well the lore of Sufism. Or, he drops his head and jerks it about so that it be thought that he is experiencing ecstasy. Or, he learns some Traditions and stories and relates them so that it is said that he is very learned and has visited many saints and made many journeys.

THE FOURTH KIND of hypocrisy is in devotion: as when someone comes from afar, he performs the formal prayer scrupulously lowering his head. He lengthens his bows and prostrations and does not look about. He gives more charity in public, and other such acts. When he walks, he walks with his head down. However, if he is alone, he walks rapidly and looks in all directions, but—when he espies someone in the distance—he resumes walking slowly.

THE FIFTH KIND is that he displays that he has many disciples and many students, that lords and princes come to greet him and give him presents; that great shakys hold in respect and notice him. It may happen that these things have been disclosed by his own tongue, or that he disputes with someone saying: "Who art thou and who art thy disciples and who was thy spiritual guide? I have visited many spiritual guides and spent so many years in the service of so-and-so. Which of the spiritual guides hast thou visited and which of them didst thou serve?" and so forth. For reason of this, he burdens himself with many sorrows.

With respect to spiritual delight,¹²⁹¹ hypocrisy in all of those (pains) is easy, for there is the monk who himself may bring a single

¹²⁹¹ "spiritual delight": *shurb*.

bean for himself as food, with the spiritual pleasure that people know of that and speak his praises. All of what we have recounted is forbidden if it is in worship and for the appearance of being an ascetic; for asceticism must be for the sake of God Most High.

However, if one seeks acceptance and rank with something that is not an act of worship, it is permitted. Indeed, anyone who comes out of his house wears better and more decorated clothing. That is permitted. Indeed, it is Practice (of the Prophet). In this fashion, he is displaying his good looks and courtesy, not his asceticism. On the contrary, if a person displays his worth in the knowledge of language, grammar, mathematics, medicine, or something other than the knowledge of religion that is reserved for devotions, pretense is permitted; for it is a pretense in the quest for rank. We have stated that when the quest for rank and honor is not excessive, it is permitted, but not in acts of devotion or worship.

One day the Messenger (S) felt a desire to gather the Companions. He gazed into a cask of water and straightened his turban and hair. 'Ayishah (R) said: O Messenger of God, dost thou do thus?' He said: "Yes, God Most High likes of His servant that when he wishes to see his brethren, he look good for them and set himself in order." However much one sets oneself in order, it is an act of the Messenger (S) and also a principle of religion, for he had been charged with setting himself aright in their hearts and eyes so that they would increase their inclination towards him and follow him. So, if a person adorns himself too, it is permissible, for it is a Practice (of the Prophet).

One of the benefits of this is that when one keeps himself in disarray and does not observe courtesy, he will be talked about behind his back and he will become repugnant to others. This may be the reason for that.¹²⁹²

However, when hypocrisy is in religion, it is forbidden for two reasons: One is that one has practiced deception by pretending to people that he is sincere in worship, but when his soul looks at people it is not sincere. If the people knew that which he is doing is for them, they would hold him as an enemy and not accept him.

The other is that when one performs formal prayer, fasts, and performs the worship of God Most High for the sake of another, he is mocking (God), and he has made a helpless, weak servant his object of desire, when the object should be God Most High. He is like the person who stands before a king in the appearance of service, but his private purpose is that he look at a young male slave or a maidservant while pretending to the king that he stands in his service—yet his purpose is

¹²⁹² That is, in the manner of those who seek to repel the world by appearing blameworthy, as discussed in the previous chapter.

something else. This is a kind of contempt that he has shown the king, that another is more important for his service than his sovereign is.

In the same way, whoever performs his formal prayers hypocritically is in reality bowing and prostrating himself for others. If the aim of the prostration was to honor a person, the ascription of partnership to God is obvious. But, the hypocrisy (of a man) honoring a person in a manner so that his acceptance by the other has become the object—so that while he prostrates himself to God Most High, he obtains the acceptance of the other by these means—is the covert, not overt, ascription of partners to God.¹²⁹³

DISCLOSING THE DEGREES OF HYPOCRISY

Know that there are different degrees of hypocrisy and some are greater than others. The distinction arise from three principles:

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE is that the purpose of the hypocrisy is without any desire to gain spiritual reward, such as when one performs formal prayer or fasts, but if one is alone, he does not. This is very serious and its punishment is great. However, if there is also the object of obtaining spiritual reward (from these acts of worship, but if he is alone, he does not perform them, this too is closer to the first degree. His weak purpose (for spiritual reward) will not exclude one from the wrath of God Most High.

If the desire for spiritual reward does not predominate and if, when one is alone, he performs (the acts of worship), but his pleasure increases when someone else sees it and this makes it easier for him, it is my hope that his worship be not nullified by this and that the spiritual reward not be lost. However, he will be punished according to the amount of the pleasure of the hypocrisy, or his spiritual reward decreased by that amount. However, if both purposes are equal, so that one does not exceed the other, it is ascribing partnership to God and the literal meaning of the Traditions is that he will not leap out of that safely and equally, rather, he will be punished.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE IS the difference between that which is done hypocritically and that is done as devotion. In this, there are three degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is hypocrisy with regard to the basic tenets of faith. This is the belief of the hypocrite and his affair will be more

¹²⁹³ That is, if a person were to prostrate himself before a person, this would be obvious ascription of a partner or partners to God; but if he performs his bows and prostrations outwardly for God but inwardly for the good opinion of a person, then the hypocrisy is a covert or an indirect ascription of partners to God, rather than a overt or direct ascription.

difficult than that of the unbeliever, for in his heart he is an unbeliever too, while in appearance he is deceptive. There were many such at the beginning of Islam, but now they are fewer. However, the Libertines, who have become atheists and hold no belief in the Religious Law and the Hereafter and who display their disagreement openly, are among the hypocrites who will remain in hell for all eternity.

THE SECOND DEGREE is hypocrisy with regard to tenets of worship, such as the person who performs the formal prayers without obligatory purification—*God forbid!*—or who fasts, but when alone does not keep it. This too is a great (matter), but not as great as hypocrisy with regard to the basic tenets of faith. However, since he prefers a position close to people more than that close to God Most High, his faith is weak. Even though he is not an unbeliever, yet he is in danger of unbelief at the time of death, should he not repent.

THE THIRD DEGREE is one who is not hypocritical with regard to the basic tenets of faith and religious obligations, but is with regard to the Practices of the Prophet as when he performs the (voluntary) night formal prayers, gives alms, attends congregations, fasts on the Day of 'Arafah and on 'Ashura, Mondays, Thursdays, and the excellent days of fasting,¹²⁹⁴ so that he not be reproached and so that he may be praised. Perhaps he says: "I think that I have not performed them, as they were not incumbent upon me, and now that I do not expect any spiritual reward for them there must not be any punishment either."¹²⁹⁵ That is not how it is, for these acts of worship belong to God Most High and there is no portion of them for man. If they are done for mankind, mankind has been given precedence over God Most High in something which is for none other than God, may he be honored and glorified.

This is mockery and a cause of punishment, even though there will not be the harshness that would be (in the case of hypocrisy with respect to) the religious obligations. It would be close to that hypocrisy with respect to the Practices that are of the character of acts of worship, as when he sees a person he performs the bows and prostrations (of formal prayer) more scrupulously, without paying attention to anything, and prolonging the recitation of the Quran. He seeks out a congregation

¹²⁹⁴ "the excellent days (of fasting)" (*ayyām-i fāḍil*): six days in Shawwāl, the month following Ramaḍān, excluding the three days of the Festival at the beginning of Shawwāl during which one should not fast. All of the pious acts in this list are Practices of the Prophet (*sunnat*), not religious obligations commanded by God (*farīdah*). AA omits this item from his text.

¹²⁹⁵ That is, he has observed these Practices of the Prophet for the purpose of impressing people and he hopes to escape the punishment for that hypocrisy by declaring that it would be as though he had not done them. He never expected any spiritual reward, so he does not expect any punishment either. But Ghazzali refutes this argument in the rest of the paragraph.

and he does not do it (when) alone. He takes a place in the front row¹²⁹⁶ and gives of that which is better for the poor tax. He guards his tongue during the fast and sits privately.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE is the difference in the objective of the hypocrite, for there must, of course, be a motive for his hypocrisy. This is of three degrees:

THE FIRST DEGREE is that his objective be some rank, so that from that he can reach some corruption or sin, as when he makes a show of trustworthiness, piety, and caution with regard to the doubtful things in wealth and property so that he may be given the supervision of the charitable religious foundations, judgeship, inheritances, custody, deposits in trust, and the property of orphans. This so that he may do some treachery with them, or that he may be given some money to be distributed as poor tax and alms and to be delivered to the deserving, or that he spend money on the poor on the journey of the Pilgrimage, or that he spend it for the Sufi hospices, or spend it for the construction of mosques and inns (so that he will be able to misuse these funds). He holds assemblies and exhibits his piety while his eye falls on some woman whom he hopes will desire him so that she will sit with him in corruption, or he attends assemblies with the intention of looking at a woman or a lad. These and their like are the worst of objectives by which he makes the worship of God Most High a highway to achieve his sin. It is as though when someone casts some suspicion on his property or wife, he gives money in alms and displays probity until that suspicion passes, until it is said: "How could a person who gives of his own wealth consider the wealth of others lawful?"¹²⁹⁷

THE SECOND DEGREE is that his motive be a permitted thing, such as a preacher¹²⁹⁸ who pretends to be an ascetic so that he be given something, or that he marry a woman whom he desires. This, too, is disliked by God Most High, even if his condition is not so critical as that of the preceding case. This one, too, has made devotion to God Most High a way to achieve the goods of the world, while devotion is the path to proximity to the Divine Presence and obtaining the happiness of the Hereafter. When he has made it the way of the world, his betrayal is immense.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that instead of going after something, he avoids something so that he will not be regarded with disrespect: he would be viewed as the pious and righteous are. Just as when he is walking and he sees someone in the distance, he walks slowly with his head bowed and begins to walk in the manner of a shaykh, lest it be said

¹²⁹⁶ "the front row" of those performing formal prayer in a congregation.

¹²⁹⁷ That is: "How could he prey upon the property of others?"

¹²⁹⁸ "a preacher" (*mudhakkir*): literally, "one who leads the remembrance (of God)."

that he is one of the negligent and so that it be thought that even on the road, he is doing the work of religion. If he wants to laugh, he suppresses it so that it not be said that he has become frivolous; or, that he does not joke for fear that it be said he is being sarcastic; or, that he sighs and then says: "*I ask the forgiveness of God!*" and he says: "*Glory be to God!*" for this human lapse: "What room for a lapse is there for us when that is before us?" God Most High knows from his heart that had he been alone, he would not have asked for divine forgiveness, nor would he have expressed those regrets.

Or, someone slanders another in his presence, and he says: "People have more important work than that. It would be preferable if they busied themselves with their own backbiting and defects," so that it not be said that he backbites. Or, he sees some people who are performing voluntary night formal night prayers or the night prayer, or **fasting on Thursdays and Mondays**. (He thinks) that if he does not do these things, he will considered lazy. He joins them out of the fear of that. Or, he does not fast on the Day of 'Arafah or 'Ashura, but does not drink water so that he will appear thirsty so that it be thought that he is keeping the fast. Or, (when) someone says: "Eat this food," he replies: "Excuse me," that is, (to imply:) "I am fasting," when he is not. In this, two pollutions are combined: one is the hypocrisy in that he is not fasting, and the other is that he is signaling: "I am not saying explicitly that I am fasting and I am concealing my worship and I always saying 'excuse me,' but I do not say I am fasting." He also desires to show himself sincere. It may be that he drink water and become impatient to begin making excuses: "I was ill last night. I was not able to fast today," or: "So-and-so made me break my fast." Or, he may not say it immediately because they would know it is hypocrisy. He waits a time, then, he brings up a subject from another quarter and says: "The hearts of mothers are very weak and they think that if a child fasts it will die." That is: "I am not fasting because of my mother's heart." Or, he says: "When people fast, they go to sleep early and cannot spend the night in prayer." Satan begins to cause these things like it to flow from his tongue. When the filth of hypocrisy is internal, the wretched reciter is unaware of it, for he does not know that he is tearing out his own roots and bringing his own worship to perdition.

This is what is itself easy, for there are some forms of hypocrisy that are more hidden than the sound of the footsteps of an ant. The perspicacious and the learned are unable to discern them, so what can be expected of foolish worshippers?

**DISCLOSING THE HYPOCRISY THAT IS MORE HIDDEN
THAN THE FOOTSTEPS OF AN ANT**

Know that some forms of hypocrisy are obvious, such as the person who performs the night formal prayer among people, but not when he is alone. This is obvious. More hidden than this is that one have the custom of performing formal prayer every night, but when someone else is present, he becomes more energetic and more lively. This, too, is obvious and not like the creeping of the ant, for it may be recognized. Rather, it may also be more concealed than this, as when he does not increase in energy and not become more lively and is as he is every night when performing formal prayer. No sign is immediately apparent. It is kept concealed in the midst of the soul as fire in iron, but its effect will become evident at that time when people learn that he has this quality and he is pleased and finds an expansiveness in himself (because of that). This joy and expansiveness is the sign that hypocrisy is concealed in his heart. If he does not counter this delight with repugnance, it is to be feared that this hidden vein will assault his self and not demand concealment, so that it manufactures a reason for people to become aware (of his state). If he does not declare it explicitly, he will hint at it. If he does not hint, he will exhibit it by means of his features. He will show himself downcast and tired, so that it be thought that he was awake all night.

It may be more deeply hidden than this also. It may be so that he does not delight in the peoples' knowledge about him and his zeal does not increase in their presence, yet his heart is not devoid of hypocrisy. The sign of this is that when a person comes to him and does not salute (him) with "*peace*" first, he finds some astonishment within himself. If a person decreases his respect for him, or does not hasten to fulfill his needs, or shows no leniency in his buying and selling with him, he finds amazement in his heart and objects, for if that worship had not been hidden, there would not have been this amazement. One would say that his certainty about this concealed worship demands respect and, in short, the non-existence of that worship or its existence was not the same to him. His soul is not yet devoid of hidden hypocrisy. If one gives a person a thousand dinars to get something from him which is worth a hundred thousand dinars, one does not put the other under an obligation with this and one does not expect any respect; doing so or not doing so is the equal in his eyes with respect to people. When one performs an act of worship for God Most High in order to attain eternal happiness, why should one expect respect? Thus, the most hidden hypocrisy is that.

'Ali (R) says that on the Day of Resurrection it will be said to the reciters of the Quran:¹²⁹⁹ "Did they not sell you goods more cheaply? Did they not attend to your needs? Did they not salute you first?" That is, all of these are the rewards of your work which ye accepted but did not keep pure. One of those who had fled from mankind was engaged in worship, saying: "We have fled from temptation, but it is feared that temptation may enter our religious acts, for when we see someone, we want him to show respect and observe what is due."

It is for this reason that the sincere devotees have tried to hide their worship in the manner that vile acts and sins are hidden. For, they have recognized that nothing will be accepted at the Resurrection other than pure (acts of worship untainted with hypocrisy). They are like the person who desires to go on Pilgrimage knowing that in the desert nothing is accepted save pure gold and that there is danger to one's life. He obtains pure Moroccan gold and discards all that is counterfeit and retains the pure for the day of need, for on no day will mankind be more wretched than on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever does not secure pure deeds today will remain at a loss on that Day. No one will take his hand so long as he makes the distinction as to whether a beast or a man sees his worship, it is not devoid of hypocrisy. And so long as he considers it different whether a person sees him at worship or eating or sleeping, it is not devoid of hypocrisy.¹³⁰⁰ The Messenger (S) says: "The smallest hypocrisy and the most hidden hypocrisy is the ascription of partners to God." That is, to intrude a partner into the worship of God Most High, since the awareness of God, may He be honored and glorified, (of his worship) was not sufficient, and the awareness of others of his worship affected it.

EXCURSUS: [AT WHAT TIMES JOY AT THE PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE
OF ONE'S WORSHIP IS PERMISSIBLE]

Know that whoever takes joy in that people become aware of his worship is not devoid of hypocrisy except that the joy be justified. (Justifiable joy) is of four types:

THE FIRST is that one rejoices in the thought he had the desire of keeping it secret, but without his desiring it, God Most High disclosed it. God Most High has concealed many of the sins that he has committed. He realizes that it is a favor and grace accompanying him, for He has kept all of his unseemly acts concealed and disclosed all of the good. He rejoices at the grace and favor of God Most High, not at the praise and

¹²⁹⁹ "reciters of the Quran": See Note 316.

¹³⁰⁰ That is, his worship is not free of hypocrisy so long as he maintains a distinction in his mind between its being witnessed by man or beast, or whether he is seen at worship or at other activities. One should be as natural in one situation as in another.

acceptance of the people, as God Most High said: *Say, it is a favor of God and in His mercy; so let them rejoice.* (Q. 10:58)

THE SECOND is that one rejoices and says: "As He has concealed My unbecoming acts in this world, it is a sign that He will also conceal them in the Hereafter." For, it is related in the Traditions that God Most High is more generous than to conceal a servant's sins in this world and then disgrace him in the next world.

THE THIRD is that one rejoices because he knows that when they have seen (his worship) they will emulate him and they too will achieve eternal happiness, so that both the spiritual reward of the secret will be written for him, as he had intended to keep it hidden, and also the public spiritual reward, because it had been revealed without his willing it.

THE FOURTH is that there is joy because that person who saw it will praise him and have good faith in him. Notwithstanding this praise and belief, he is obedient to God Most High and delights in worshipping Him—not because of the honor given him (by man). The sign of this is that if he learns that that person comes to devotion through (the agency of) another, he is just as happy.

DISCLOSING THE HYPOCRISY WHICH NULLIFIES DEEDS

Know that the hypocritical thought may be at the beginning of the act of worship, at its completion, or in the midst of the act of worship.

That which is at the beginning of the act of worship nullifies that worship because sincerity in the declaration of Intention is a prerequisite. However, if the dissimulation is not with respect to a requirement (for the validity) of the act of worship, such as when one embarks upon the obligatory formal prayer at the onset of its time out of hypocrisy,¹³⁰¹ yet if one were alone, one would not commit any fault in the requirements of formal prayer, the spiritual reward for praying at the onset (of the period) would be voided, but the prayer itself would be correct because his intention for the prayer itself, for reason of religiosity, is pure. Just as when a person performs formal prayer in a building taken by force, he will have fulfilled the religious duty (of prayer), even though he is a rebel (against God),¹³⁰² but he is not sinning with respect to the requirements of the prayer. Here, too, there is no hypocrisy in the prayer (itself) and it is timely.

¹³⁰¹ The hypocrisy here is in displaying eagerness to others in the performance of the prayer at the onset of its time period, that is, directly after the call to that particular obligatory formal prayer.

¹³⁰² "rebel (against God)" *ʿasi*: sinner: he has sinned by being implicated in the usurpation of someone else's property.

However, if he performs the formal prayer with total sincerity, then the thought of hypocrisy strikes and is apparent, the formal prayer is not nullified, but for this purpose, he may be punished.

It is related than someone said: "I recited *Al-Baqarah*¹³⁰³ last night." Ibn Mas'ud (R) said: "That was his portion of the act of worship." That is, that disclosure that he had made. Someone said to the Messenger (S): "I am continually fasting." He said: "Thou art neither fasting nor not fasting." It has been said that the meaning of that is that since he announced it, (the fasting) was nullified. It appears, in our opinion, that the Messenger (S) and Ibn Mas'ud (R) were saying that by these disclosures they knew that acts of worship were not devoid of hypocrisy when they were being performed. But, if they were not tainted, it is remote that an act of worship, which was performed correctly and completed, be nullified after the fact. Also, it has been said about the meaning of the Tradition, that he said this because continuous fasting has been prohibited.

As to that hypocrisy which occurs during the performance of a formal prayer, if it dominates the act of worship, it nullifies the prayer, as when an onlooker arrives or one remembers something that he has lost. If there were not people present, he would have stopped his prayer, but he finished the prayer out of shame: such a prayer is invalid because the intention of the prayer has been put to flight and this standing (in formal prayer) is for the sake of people. However, if the prerequisite of the intention remains in place but some extra zeal has appeared because of the people's watching, and he begins to perform the prayer more scrupulously, the correct view in our opinion is that the formal prayer is not invalidated, even though with this hypocrisy he is a rebel (against God).

However, if someone witnesses his worship and he is pleased by that, Harith Muhasibi¹³⁰⁴ says: "There is a difference of opinion as to whether his prayer is invalidated or not." He says: "I was undecided about this, but now the suspicion dominates that it is nullified." Then, he said: "If a person says that a man asked the Messenger (S): 'I conceal my deeds, but when they are found out I become pleased.' The Messenger (S) said: 'Thou hast gained two rewards: one the reward of the secrecy and the other the reward of the publicity.' The answer to that is that this Tradition is "transmitted"¹³⁰⁵ and the chain of narrators is incomplete." Then he said: "Is the meaning of this that after the completion (of the act of worship), it becomes known and he is gladdened, or is the meaning

¹³⁰³ "*Al-Baqarah*" (The Cow), the second and the longest chapter of the Quran.

¹³⁰⁴ Harith Muhasibi: See Note 832.

¹³⁰⁵ "transmitted" (*mursal*): A Tradition which goes back only to the second generation (the Followers) after the Prophet. The name of the Companion who would be the link is not given. This weakens the authenticity of the Tradition in the eyes of Muslim scholars.

that he is happy by the grace of God, may He be honored and glorified, at the disclosure of the his act of devotion—as we have discussed above—by reason of the fact that no one says being delighted at the public knowledge of his act of worship would be the cause of an increase in his reward for that act, even if it was not the cause of a sin.” These are the words of Harith Muhasibi. The most apparent, in our opinion, is that being gladdened to that extent, when nothing is added to the act (of worship), the requirements of the intention remain in place, and the act is in accordance with the intention, then, the formal prayer does not become invalidated. *And God knows best what is correct.*

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT OF THE SOUL SICK WITH HYPOCRISY

Know that this is a great sickness and it is very dangerous. Its treatment is necessary, and it will not be amenable to treatment except with total earnestness. For, it is an illness mingled with the temperament of the human soul and firmly established in it; it responds to treatment with difficulty. The reason for the severity of this illness is that from childhood, a person sees in mankind that they regard each other with hypocrisy and dissimulation and that they embellish themselves in the eyes of others, and that this is all of their activity, or (at least) most of it. This nature starts to grow in the soul of the child and increases day by day, so by that time he has achieved full reason and knows that it is harmful, this habit may have mastered him and its treatment become difficult. It requires a long time and no one is devoid of this illness. This earnest effort is every person's individual religious duty. In this treatment, there are two states:

ONE (STATE) IS THE SEEKING for a purgative that will purge its roots from within. This purgative is a compound of theory and practice.

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL, it is that one recognizes the need. For a person does that which he does because there is an immediate pleasure for him. When he knows that its resulting harm will be of such a degree that he will not have strength to bear it, giving it up will be easy for him, just as if he knows that there is a fatal poison in some honey, he would avoid it even though he may crave it.

The source of hypocrisy, though it all comes from the love of rank and dignity, nevertheless has three roots: one is the love for praise and eulogy, another is the fear of censure and reproach, and the third is the envy of others. It was for this reason that a desert Arab asked the Messenger (S): “What dost thou say about the man who fights in defense of Islam for the sake of honor, or for the sake of displaying his manliness, or so that he will be talked about?” The Messenger (S) said: “Whoever strives for that so that word of (God's) Unity may become triumphant is on the path of God, may He be honored and glorified.” All

of this refers to the quest for remembrance and praise and the fear of reproach.

And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever fights in defense of Islam so as to obtain a camel's hobbling cord receives nothing from the battle except that for which he has declared an Intention." Therefore, the result of dissimulation comes from these three roots. The appetite for the people's praise must be shattered by his visualizing and contemplating his own disgrace at the Resurrection: a herald will cry publicly, saying: "O hypocrite!" or: "O sinner!" or: "Lost One! Hadst thou no shame that thou didst sell devotion to God Most High for the prattle of people? Thou didst hold to the hearts of the created and did not fear the pleasure of the Creator. Thou hast chosen distance from God Most High so that thou might become closer to people. Thou hast preferred the acceptance of mankind to the acceptance of God. Thou hast consented to contempt for the Creator in order to obtain the praise of people. There is none more despicable to God Most High, for thou hast sought the pleasure of all and hadst no care for His pleasure, and thou hast chosen His anger."

When a reasonable person reflects upon this ignominy, he knows that the praise of the people is not established with this, especially since so many of his acts of devotion—which would be the cause of preponderance of the scale-pan of his good deeds—would be, since they were defiled by hypocrisy, the cause of the preponderance of the scale-pan of his evil deeds. If he had not committed these hypocrisies, he would have been the companion of the prophets and the saints. Now, he has fallen into the hands of the guardians of hell and become the companion of the forsaken. He has done all of this to please the people, but their pleasure will never be obtained. As soon as one is pleased, another becomes displeased. If one offers praise, another offers reproaches. And even if they all utter praises, what has one gained from them? They do not have his sustenance in their hands, nor do they have his life, nor his happiness in this world, or the next. It is absolute ignorance to put one's soul in a state of anxiety and to throw it into the danger of punishment and loathing (by God) for such a motive! One must keep this (thought) and its like fresh in one's soul.

One should examine and treat greed with that which we have discussed in the section about the love of wealth in this Pillar.¹³⁰⁶ One should consider that this craving is not faithful and if it is, it will be with degradation and obligation, and the pleasure of God Most High will be lost immediately, while the hearts of the people themselves will not be subjugated except by the will of God Most High. When the pleasure of God Most High is obtained, He will Himself subjugate their hearts to

¹³⁰⁶ Chapter Six of this Pillar.

him. If he does not (secure the pleasure of God), his disgrace will become public and souls will also fly from him.

As for the fear of the people's aspersions, it may be cured by one's saying to oneself: "If he is praised by God Most High, the reproach of the people holds no injury for him. And if he is reproached (by God), then the praise of mankind holds no benefit. If he takes the path of sincerity and cleanses his soul from anxiety about (the opinions) of people, God Most High will adorn all souls with love for him. If he does not (cleanse his soul), it will happen quickly that his hypocrisy and dissimulation will be recognized and that the disgrace which he continually fears will fall upon him, while the pleasure of God Most High will have been lost. When he summons his soul and it becomes of one aim and one thought in sincerity, it will obtain freedom from the consideration of the opinion of mankind. The (divine) lights will attach themselves to his soul, the favors and succor of (His) solicitude will become uninterrupted, and the pathway of sincerity and its pleasure will be opened before him.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL TREATMENT, it is that one keep hidden his good deeds and acts of devotion as he keeps hidden his vile deeds and sins until he accustoms himself to being content with devotion and God Most High's knowledge (of his acts). At the beginning, this is difficult, but if one makes the effort, it will become easy for him and he will obtain the pleasure of sincerity and conversation (with God). He will become so that should people become aware (of his deeds), he would pay no attention to them.

THE SECOND STATE is quieting the thoughts of hypocrisy. When the hypocritical thought appears, even if one struggles earnestly against it so that one cuts off the greed for the property of others and their praises, and all have become contemptible in one's eyes, yet Satan will start to bring hypocritical thoughts to mind in the midst of worship.

[HYPOCRITICAL THOUGHTS:] First, the thought that one knows some person has learned (of his devotion), or the hope that it will be learned. Second, a desire that appears in one's self so it may become known so that he have some dignity in their opinion. Third, the acceptance of that desire so that he aims at its realization.

The effort must be made to first fend off the thought and say to oneself: "What is public knowledge to me if the Creator be aware? For me, His knowledge is sufficient. My affair is not in the hands of the people." If the second thought concerning the people's approbation quickens, he recalls that which he has previously determined for himself: "What profit has the approval of mankind in comparison with the rebuff and disapproval of God Most High?" From this thought, a detestation will appear in opposition to that desire. Then, that appetite summons him

to the approval of mankind, while this abhorrence prohibits him. The self will become obedient to that which is more dominant and stronger.

So, there are three other matters concerning the confrontation with these three thoughts: one is the knowledge that one will be under the curse and indignation of God Most High; another is the repugnance born of this knowledge; the third is checking and warding off of hypocritical thoughts.

It may be that the appetite for hypocrisy so crowd within the soul that there is no room left for knowledge and repugnance, and that they become unperceived, even though one has previously spent considerable thought upon this. In that case, Satan has the upper hand. It is as though a person prepare himself with mildness and (then) appoint the blight of anger over himself. When that crowding arrives, anger starts to overwhelm and all is forgotten. It may happen that knowledge is present (in the soul) and he may know that this is dissimulation, but if the appetite be strong, repugnance (at the hypocrisy) may not appear. It may happen that repugnance be present too, but it cannot overcome that appetite (for dissimulation), or ward it off, and one inclines toward popular approval.

And many a scholar utters words, knowing that he is speaking hypocritically and that (this) is to his loss, yet he keeps talking and postponing (his) repentance.

Therefore, repelling hypocrisy is in accordance with the strength of one's repugnance. The strength of one's repugnance is in accordance with the strength of one's knowledge, and the strength of one's knowledge is in accordance with the strength of one's faith. Its aid comes from the angels. However, hypocrisy is in accordance with the strength of one's appetite, and aid for that comes from Satan. The soul of (God's) servant is between these two contending armies. It has a resemblance to each of these, if one resemblance overcomes it, the effect is more acceptable and it inclines more towards it.

This resemblance has been predetermine—the servant (of God) has done that to himself before the formal prayer—as to whether the character of the angels will be more dominant in him or that of the devils. So, if a hypocritical thought occurs in the midst of an act of worship, that nature begins to appear. Behind all of this, a pre-existing destiny drives one to that place whence has come one's portion of the pre-existent determination of the victory of the resemblance to the angels or of the resemblance to the devils.

EXCURSUS: THE WAY OF ELIMINATING THE PROMPTINGS OF HYPOCRISY

When thou hast opposed the importunings of hypocrisy and hast become disgusted by them, if the craving for (hypocrisy) and its promptings (still) remain in the soul, thou wilt not be culpable for that.

For, that (which remains) is (a part of) human nature. Thou hast not been commanded to nullify thine own nature; rather, thou hast been commanded to conquer, overcome and take control of it, so that thou art not thrown into the pit (of hell). When thou hast gained the power for that so that thou do not do what it demands, it is the evidence that it has been conquered and is under control. This is sufficient for the observance with respect to one's obligation. Thy disgust and thine opposition is the atonement for that craving by reason of that which the Companions said to the Messenger (S): "Thoughts occur to us that would be easier if they were thrown upon us from the sky, and we are disgusted by them." The Messenger (S) said: "Truly! Have ye attained that state?" They replied: "Yes." He said: "This is the purity and genuineness of faith and those thoughts were with regard to God Most High." The purity of faith is the revulsion at (the bad thoughts), not (the bad thoughts). Therefore, since repugnance at that is the atonement, it is better that all that is related to the doubts of mankind be effaced by that the repugnance. However, it may be that a person obtain the power to oppose Satan and his (own) self in the insinuation itself. Satan suggests and causes it to seem to him that his interest lies in that he engage in disputation with Satan. The pleasure of conversation (with God) is lost in this suggestion and the soul's occupation with it. This is a mistake, and it is of four degrees:

ONE is that one occupy himself with this disputing. It wastes time.

ANOTHER is that one is brief in this and gives (Satan) the lie, wards him off, and resumes his conversation (with God).

THE THIRD is that one not engage in denial and defense either, for one knows that these too waste time. He pays no attention to (Satan) and carries on with his conversation (with God).

THE FOURTH is that one begin to increase one's effort and craving for sincerity, for he knows that this angers Satan and he will not pay attention to him. This is the most perfect. For, when Satan realizes (the worshipper's sincerity), he loses his desire (to ensnare) him.

The similitude of this is that there be four persons who are seeking knowledge. An envier stands in their way and tries to stop one of them. He does not obey, but makes ready to fight with him and wastes time doing that. Another, whom he stops, wards him off but does not fight with him. And the third does not bother to ward him off. Rather, he pays no heed to him and continues on his way and wastes no time. The fourth pays no attention to him and begins to walk faster. This envier has attained something of his objective from the first two, but nothing from the third. From the fourth, (the envier) has obtained nothing of his objective, but has caused the increase of (the fourth man's) goodness.¹³⁰⁷

¹³⁰⁷ By causing him to hasten on the road to knowledge.

If (the envier) does not regret all (his failures), he will regret the stopping of the last and say: "I wish that I had not done that!" So, it is preferred that one should not become involved in temptation and its disputes as much as one is able, and quickly return to the conversation (with God).

DISCLOSING THE PERMISSION TO REVEAL ACTS OF DEVOTION

Know that in concealing acts of devotion there is the benefit that one achieves liberation from hypocrisy. There is also a benefit in revealing them and that is the people's following his example and the stimulation of their desire for goodness. It is for this that God Most High praised both of these (practices), saying: *If ye publish your almsgiving, it is well, but if ye hide it and give it to the poor, it will be better for you.* (Q. 2:271) He said: "If ye give alms openly, it is very good; but if ye give secretly, it is better."

Once, the Messenger (S) asked for some money. One of the Helpers brought a purse. When the people saw that, they began bringing money. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever executes a Practice well and others follow his example has his own reward, as well as the reward of those who follow his example." (This is) just like the reward for the person who wishes to go on Pilgrimage or to fight in defense of Islam and makes preparations beforehand and comes out so that people will envy (what he is doing), or the person who engages in formal prayer at night and recites the Quran in a loud voice to awaken others. Therefore, the truth of the matter is that if one is safe from hypocrisy and one's revealing (something) is so that others will follow his example and become eager for this, it is better. But, if the appetite of hypocrisy will be activated, the zeal of others will hold no benefit for him, and so concealment would be better for him. Consequently, anyone who wishes to make public his acts of worship must do so in a place where he knows that his example will be followed, for there is the person whose family will imitate him, while the people of the marketplace and others will not.

Another thing is that one must watch one's soul, as the appetite of hypocrisy commonly lies hidden inside one. On the pretext of others' following his example, he makes (his acts of devotion) public until he is ruined. This weak one is like the person who does not know how to swim and is about to drown. He seizes the hand of another and both perish. The strong one is like the person who is a teacher who swims himself and saves others too. This is the degree of the prophets, the saints, and the truly righteous. A person must not deceive himself and reveal an act of worship that he is able to conceal. The sign of candor in this is that he supposes that if it is said to him: "Keep thy devotion secret so that the people will follow the example of that other devotee. Thy (spiritual) recompense will be the same is if thou hadst revealed thine own acts."

(In that case,) if he finds a desire for revealing his devotion, it shows that he is seeking his own dignity, not the spiritual reward of the Hereafter.

Another approach concerning such (self-)disclosure is that after completing an act of devotion, he says: "What have I done? There is a delight and a spiritual pleasure for the self in this too." It may be that he talks excessively. It is a duty that he hold his tongue and not disclose it until that time when the praise and censure of the public is the equal to him and their approval or rejection of him the same. Then, when he knows that in discussing this, there is a stimulus to others for the desire of goodness, he speaks. Thus, the great ones who were people of strength have said much (about these things):

Sa'd bin Mu'adh ¹³⁰⁸ (R) said: "Since becoming a Muslim, I have not performed a formal prayer in which I have spoken to my self except that which will be said to it in the Hereafter and what it will say in reply. I have heard absolutely nothing from the Messenger (S) which I was not certain to be truth." 'Umar (R) said: "I have no concern about whether affairs will be difficult for me or easy when I arise in the morning. What do I know about in which my benefit will lie?" Ibn Mas'ud (R) said: "I do not wish for anything different from whatever condition I arise in of a morning." 'Uthman (R) said: "Since swearing fealty to the Messenger (S), I have not touched my genitals with my right hand, I have not sung songs, and I have not told a lie." Abu Sufyan (R) said at the time of death: "Do not weep for me; since becoming a Muslim I have committed no sins." And 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz (R), said: "God Most High has not decided anything for me which I would wish He had not done. No pleasure has remained for me except in that which God Most High has destined (for me)."

All of these were the words of the strong (in faith) and the weak must not be deceived by them. Know that God Most High has designs in affairs that no one can perceive. Under every bad thing there is a good which we cannot comprehend, and in hypocrisy, there is much good for mankind, even though the hypocrite is lost, for there are many things which a person does in dissimulation which others suppose are being done sincerely, and they follow his example.

A story: It is related that in Basrah it was thus at morning, that they would go to every quarter reciting the Quran aloud and listening to the remembrance (of God) so that the desire of others (for faith) would be increased. Then, someone wrote a book about the fine points of

¹³⁰⁸ Sa'd bin Mu'adh: one of the Companions of the Prophet. He was one of the chiefs of the Jewish Madinan tribe of Aws and became a Muslim at the age of 31. He died at the age of 37 from wounds received during the battle of the Ditch, AH6/627CE. As he lay dying, he was selected by the Jewish tribes of Madinah to pass judgment upon them for joining forces with the enemies of the Muslims in an attempt to expel them from Madinah.

hypocrisy, and all of them stopped (that custom) and the desire for that weakened. Then, it was said: "Would that that person had not written that book! So that the hypocrite would sacrifice himself for others and go to perdition while the others would recite with sincerity."

DISCLOSING THE PERMISSION TO CONCEAL SINS

Know that it may happen that making worship public be hypocrisy, while concealing sins is permissible at all times by reason of seven excuses:

THE FIRST EXCUSE is that God Most High has commanded that ye conceal corruption and sinning. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever is tainted by something lewd should keep the veil of God Most High over it."

THE SECOND EXCUSE is that when it remains concealed in this world, it is glad tidings in that there may be hope that it will also be concealed in the next world.

THE THIRD EXCUSE is that one fears the censure of mankind which will occupy his soul and confuse his worship and distract his soul.

THE FOURTH EXCUSE is that the soul will become distressed by blame and reproach—this is human nature—and their avoidance is not forbidden. Holding reproach and praise equal is the ultimate Unity (of God), and not every one achieves that. However, devotion performed out of fear of reproach is not permissible, for devotion must be with sincerity. Enduring the absence of praise and commendation is easy, but enduring reproaches is difficult.

THE FIFTH EXCUSE is that one fears that he will become the object of attacks and be tormented. The Law has given him permission—though his punishment is also obligatory—to conceal it and repent. After another evil act, shunning is lawful.

THE SIXTH EXCUSE is that one is ashamed in front of people, and shame is praised and a part of faith. Shame is one thing, and hypocrisy another.

THE SEVENTH EXCUSE is that one fears that, if it is disclosed, the lewd will follow his example and become emboldened in their sinning.

One is excused when one conceals with these intentions. If his intention is that the people believe him to be a pious man, it is hypocrisy and forbidden. However, if a person be such that his exterior and interior are the same, this is the degree of the truly righteous, but this is under the condition that he does not commit any sin secretly. However, when he has done so, if he says: "Say, tell the people too all that God Most High

knows!" this is ignorance and not proper, for preserving the secret of God Most High is an obligation.¹³⁰⁹

DISCLOSING THE PERMISSION TO REFRAIN FROM CHARITABLE ACTS OUT OF FEAR OF HYPOCRISY

Know that there are three degrees of devotion: one is that which is not related to the public, such as formal prayer and fasting; another is that which is related to the public, such as the offices of the caliphate, judgeship, and governance; and another is that which affects both the public and the official, such as preaching and causing (people) to remember (God).

AS FOR THE FIRST KIND, such as formal prayer, fasting, and Pilgrimage: refraining from them out of fear of hypocrisy is absolutely not proper. However, one must make an effort to fend off the hypocritical thought that strikes at the beginning of an act of worship or during it, and one should renew his declaration of Intention and one should neither prolong nor shorten his worship because people will notice, except in a situation where the intention of worship does not remain and all is hypocrisy. In that case, (the act) itself is not worship. However, so long as the root of the intention remains, it is not proper to leave off one's worship.

Fudayl (R) says: "Hypocrisy is that one abandon his worship, fearing the people's seeing it. However, whoever worships for the sake of the public, that is the ascription of partners with God."¹³¹⁰ Know that Satan desires that thou not show devotion. When he cannot do that, he says to thee: "People are watching and (thy worship) is hypocrisy, not devotion," so that by means of this fraud, he may keep thee from worship. If thou pay attention to this and, for example, flee and go underground, he would also say this: "The people know that thou hast fled and become a recluse, and this is not piety. Rather, it is hypocrisy." So, the method is that thou sayest to him: "Keeping one's heart with the people and abandoning devotion because of them is also hypocrisy. Indeed, the people's seeing it or not seeing it is the same. I shall keep to the same to which I have been accustomed and suppose that the people do not see me." For, refraining for fear of the people is as though a person gives wheat to his own servant lad (and tells him) to winnow it. He does not winnow it and says: "I feared that if I winnowed it I would not be able to make it completely free (of chaff)." (The master) says: "O

¹³⁰⁹ That is, God Most High is privy to all and He is our confidante. One should not disclose the secret between man and God frivolously.

¹³¹⁰ The ascription of partners with God (*shirk*) is a far greater sin than hypocrisy.

fool! Now thou hast abandoned the main thing and by that, not even the winnowing has been achieved!"

So, a servant (of God) has been commanded to be sincere. When he abandons the task, he has also abandoned sincerity, for sincerity lies in action. However, that which is related about Ibrahim Nakha'i (R)—that he was reading the Quran and when someone entered, he closed the book and said: "Let no one see that I am always reading the Quran"—was because he knew that when (the person) entered, he would have to speak, and he would have to leave off the reading of the Quran, so he considered it better to conceal it.

Hasan Basri says: "There was a person who would break into tears and would conceal that so that the people not know of it." This is permissible, for open weeping has no intrinsic merit. It is not an act of worship that is being abandoned. And he says: "There was a person who used to want to remove things from the road¹³¹¹ who refrained from doing so, lest he be recognized for piety." This is the story of a weak person who fears for himself that the people would find out about him and that his other acts of worship would become distracted. However, this caution out of fear of fame is not good. Rather, (the work) should be done and (any) hypocrisy (in the act) driven away—unless a person is weak and deems this advisable for himself; but there is a loss in this.

THE SECOND KIND is that which is related to people, such as judgeship, governance, and caliphate. These are among the great acts of worship when adorned with justice. If there is injustice, they are great sins. For, whoever does not have the faith in himself that he will be able to do justice, accepting such an office is forbidden, for the harm is tremendous, not like formal prayer and fasting in which there is not an intrinsic pleasure—the pleasure in that is that the people see.¹³¹² But, running a government—which is a great pleasure and which nourishes one's self esteem—is appropriate for the person who has faith in himself. However, if one has tested himself before achieving office and has exercised trustworthiness in affairs, but fears that when attaining office he will become changed and will dissemble for fear of removal from office, there is a difference of opinion. Some have said that he should accept it, as this is nothing more than a suspicion. Since he has tested himself, confidence lies in that. The correct view, in our opinion, is that it is not proper for him to accept (the office) because at that time the self

¹³¹¹ "things from the road": things that obstruct, inconvenience, or injure travelers, such as stones, thorns, and the like.

¹³¹² That is, the acts themselves do not produce a feeling of pleasure in the sense that satisfying one's appetites does. The pleasure for acts of devotion which satisfies the appetite for popular approval is, of course, harmful to the spiritual reward and purity of the those acts.

will promise that it will be fair. It may happen that this will be (the self's) coyness. When he achieves a governing office, he may change. Since he displayed hesitation from the first, in most cases he will change. Avoidance is preferable.

Governing is not the work of anyone save the strong. Abu Bakr (R) said to Rafi':¹³¹³ "Never accept the office of sovereignty, even if it is only over two persons." Then when the Truly Righteous¹³¹⁴ accepted the office of the caliphate, Rafi' said: "Didst thou not forbid me and now thou hast accepted?" (Abu Bakr) said: "Now I also forbid thee. May God's curse be upon him who does not do justice." The similitude of the objection of a weak person is that a man who forbids his own child from going near the water's edge goes into the water himself, as he knows how to swim. If the child does that too, he may perish. Whenever the ruler is an oppressor and cannot judge justly, sycophancy becomes necessary. His accepting judgeship or any other office of rule over others is not proper. If he has accepted, the fear of dismissal is not an excuse with regard to sycophancy. Rather, he should do justice so that he not be dismissed, and he should rejoice in justice, if he rules for the sake of God Most High.

THE THIRD KIND is preaching, issuing religious judgments, teaching, and the narration of Traditions, and in this, there is also a tremendous pleasure. Hypocrisy most often touches one by way of formal prayer and fasting, and this is close to the office of ruling others. There is this amount of difference: that causing remembrance, preaching, and (relating) Traditions, as they benefit the listener, so too they benefit the speaker and invite (him) to religion and prevent hypocrisy. Rule is not like that. Therefore, if someone is afflicted with hypocrisy, the opinion is that he should cease those (religious activities). Some have also fled from this.¹³¹⁵ Most of the Companions (R) from whom religious judgments were sought passed (the requests) on to others. Bishr Hafī (R) hid a number of satchels of Traditions beneath the earth and said: "I find the passion for being a narrator of Traditions in myself. If I did not find that, I would have related them."

The forefathers have said that "*It was narrated to us*"¹³¹⁶ is one of the gates of the world. Whoever says this is saying: "Show me to the highest place (in the assembly)." Someone requested permission from

¹³¹³ Rafi': Several men by the name of Rāfi' are cited in the *Sirah*. No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹³¹⁴ "Truly Righteous" (*Siddiq*), an epithet for Abu Bakr, the first caliph, rgd. AH11-13/CE.

¹³¹⁵ As did Ghazzali himself.

¹³¹⁶ "It was narrated to us" (*haddathanā*) is the formula used when beginning to relate a Tradition of the Prophet.

'Umar (R) to instruct the people in wisdom every morning, but he forbade that, saying: "I fear that thou wilt puff thyself so much that thou wilt reach the Pleiades."¹³¹⁷ Ibrahim Taymi (R) says: "When thou feelest the passion for talking in thyself, be silent. When thou feelest the passion for silence in thyself, speak out." Thus, it is our choice in this regard that the narrator (of Traditions) or the remembrancer (in the remembrance of God) should examine his own soul. If he finds any intention in his soul for an act of devotion to God Most High by speaking, even if be mixed with a hypocritical thought, he should not hold back and he should speak out. This correct intention in his soul will be nourished so as to increase in strength. Its rule is the rule of the voluntary formal prayers that are the Practice of the Prophet or the supererogatory formal prayers that one should not abandon because of hypocritical thoughts, as long as one finds the foundation of the intention. This differs from the office of a ruler: should concern be mixed with that, flight from it is preferable, for the intention is usually nullified.

It was for this that Abu Hanifah (R) fled from the high office of governance and judgeship that was offered to him. He said: "I am not suitable for that." He was asked why. He answered: "If I speak the truth that I am not suitable, I am not suitable. If I lie, a liar himself is not suitable for judgeship." He did not flee from or stop teaching.

However, if one does not find any intention for performing an act of worship in his soul, it is all hypocrisy and the pursuit of power. It is a religious duty incumbent upon him to refrain. But, when we are asked: "What should we do?" we look (at the situation). If there is no benefit for the people in his words—such as a person whose reminding is of a type of boasting, rhymed prose, quaint sayings, or words which encourage the people with the promise of mercy for their sins; or that his teaching be polemics, disputation, and debate which sow the seeds of envy and vainglory in the soul—we forbid him from that. For, forbidding him is a great good for him and for the people. However, if his words are profitable for the people, and in accordance with the Law, and the people consider him sincere, and his teaching with respect to the religious sciences is beneficial, we do not give him permission to desist. For, in opposing him, there lies the loss to others—and they are many, while in his speaking, he incurs little loss. In our opinion, the salvation of many persons is more important than the salvation of one. We offer him as a sacrifice for the people, for the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High aids this religion by means of people who have no portion in it." This means from those persons! So indeed, let us not add more to this that we say: "Do not stop and continue to exert thyself to distance thyself from

¹³¹⁷ "the Pleiades" (*thurayyā*): the constellation of that name, also known as the Seven Sisters, the daughters of Atlas in Greek mythology.

hypocrisy, and form correct intentions. Learn from thy former sermons and fear God Most High. Then frighten others (into the fear of God)."

QUESTION: If a person asks: "How do we know that the intention of the preacher is correct and what is that sign of that?"

ANSWER: Know that a correct intention is that (the preacher's) aim be that the people take to the path of God and that they turn away from worldliness, as a compassion for the people. If another person appears whose preaching is more beneficial and the people's acceptance of his words greater, he should rejoice at that. If a person has fallen into a well and there is a stone on the top of the well, he wants to liberate him according to the rule of compassion. He struggles greatly with that (stone). When (another) appears who (is strong enough to) remove the stone, (the former) contents himself with his pains and is happy with that. If the preacher does not rejoice and finds envy in himself, he should know that his purpose was that he call (people) to himself, not to God Most High. Another sign is that when the worldly and officials enter his assembly, he does not alter his speech, but continues in his customary manner. Another sign is that when his words carry the people into shouting and beginning to weep, and the basis of those words is not substantial, he abandons that theme. These and their like should be sought inside oneself. If one finds them and is not repulsed by them, this too is absolute hypocrisy. If one finds some displeasing thing in himself, it is the evidence that there is also another intention. He must strive until that other intention becomes overcome.

EXCURSUS: [THE JOY OF WORSHIP IS NOT ALWAYS HYPOCRISY]

It often happens that because of (the presence of) people a joy in worship appears, and that joy is valid and not a kind of hypocrisy, for a believer is always eager in an act of worship, but it may be that some obstacle prevents it. Perhaps, it is because of the people that that obstacle is lifted so that the joy pulsates. As when a person is at home, the evening prayer is hard for him because he is engaged in sleep and conversation with his folk, or the bedding has been prepared. When one happens to be in another's home, these obstacles are removed and the joy of worship appears. Or, when one happens to be in an unfamiliar house and sleep does not come, one busies oneself in formal prayer. Or, one sees some people who are all engaged in performing the evening obligatory formal prayer and he too hurries and busies himself with the evening obligatory formal prayer. Or, at a place where the people are fasting, or the food is not ready and the joy of fasting appears. Or, one sees some people in a mosque performing the voluntary night formal prayers, but is lazy (in that respect) at home. When he sees them, the laziness departs with the strength of approbation. Or, one sees the people

on Friday all engaged in the service of God; he too begins to perform the obligatory formal prayer and say the praises (of God), more than he does every day. All of these are possible and there is no hypocrisy in them.

Satan says to him: "Do not do it, for (the joy) appeared because of the people. It is hypocrisy!" Perhaps, the joy is because of the people and not out a desire for goodness and the downfall of obstacles. Satan says: "Do not do it." But the angels say: "Do it! The desire itself is in thee, but the obstacles are before thee. Now they have departed!"

So, one must separate these two from each other. The sign is that one imagines that if the people did not see him, while he saw them, would the joy of worship be the same? If it remains in place, it itself is the desire for goodness. If it does not, it is hypocrisy and he should cease. If both are present, both the desire for goodness and the love for the people's praise, he looks to discern which (motive) is the stronger and relies upon that. It is as though he hears a verse (of the Quran) and sees some people weeping. He too will weep, but if he were alone, he would not weep. This is not hypocrisy, for seeing the weeping of the people liquefied his heart. When he sees the people sorrowing, he also remembers. He begins to weep and wail. Perhaps, the source of the weeping is the softness of the soul and the moaning and wailing hypocritical so that others hear it. It may be that he falls from the sorrow, but at the same moment that he finds the strength to get up, he fears that it will be said that his ecstasy was not genuine. At that moment, he is again a hypocrite, but in reality, he was not.

It may happen that he is dancing and the strength comes to him, but he props himself against a person and goes slowly so that it not be said that his ecstasy left him quickly. It as though he seeks forgiveness and says: "*I seek refuge with God!*" and he says this because of a sin that he has recalled or sees some shortcoming in himself, while the people are still performing an act of worship. This is correct. The Messenger (S) says: "Hypocrisy has seventy doors." Whenever a hypocritical thought strikes, one must imagine that God Most High is aware of the pollution of his inner self and that he is in the enmity and anger of God Most High so that he may distance himself from himself and remember what the Messenger said: "*I seek refuge with God from the humility of hypocrisy.*" This is that the body be humble, but the soul be distracted.

EXCURSUS: [EVERY DEED WHICH IS FOR SPIRITUAL REWARD MUST BE SOLELY FOR GOD]

Know that in all that is an act of devotion, such as formal prayer and fasting, sincerity is a necessity. As for that (thing) which is permitted, if it is desired that there be a spiritual reward, sincerity is also a necessity. For example, if one makes an effort with respect to the needs of a Muslim for the sake of spiritual reward, one's resolve must be

steadfast and one must not expect any gratitude or recompense from him. It is the same for whoever teaches. If, for instance, one expected from the student that he follow him or serve him, he has sought a compensation and will not obtain spiritual reward. However, if he has not sought any recompense, but (the student) does a service for him, it is preferable that he not accept it. If he does, when there has been not a desire (for it), it would appear that the spiritual reward would not be lost. (The student) will not be astonished at one's turning away of the service if one does that. The circumspect have avoided that to the extent that when one of them fell into a well and a rope was brought, he swore that no one who had heard a Tradition from him or to whom he had taught the Quran should touch the rope, for he feared that (that aid) would be (counted) a recompense nullifying the spiritual reward (of his teaching).

Someone brought a present to Sufyan Thawri (R). He did not accept it. (The man) said: "I have never heard a Tradition from thee." (Sufyan) said: "Thy brother has. I fear that my heart will become more tender for him than for others."

Someone brought two purses of gold to Sufyan. (The man) said: "Thou knowest that my father was thy friend and ate of the lawful. Now this inheritance is lawful. Accept it from me." When he accepted it and that person had gone away, Sufyan sent those purses of gold by the hand of his son after him. By chance, he had remembered that his friendship with that person's father was for the sake of God Most High. Sufyan's son said: "When I returned, I could not stand it. I said: 'Is thy heart made of stone? Thou seest that I have a family and I have nothing and thou hast no mercy upon us!'" Sufyan said: "O son, thou always want to eat well. Will I be asked about that at the Resurrection? I do not possess the strength for that."

In the same way, the learner too ought not to seek anything in learning except the pleasure of God Most High and should not have any expectation from the teacher. It may happen that he suppose that it is permissible to display his obedience to his teacher so that he will be (more) earnest in teaching him. This is an error and the essence of hypocrisy. Instead, one should seek the esteem of God Most High through serving the teacher, and not (the esteem) of the teacher. In the same way, one should seek the satisfaction of one's mother and father through the satisfaction of God Most High and not make a display of himself to them with devoutness so that they will be pleased with him, for this is an immediate sin. In summary, any act from which one will seek spiritual reward must be purely for God, *may He be honored and glorified*.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCERNING THE TREATMENT OF PRIDE AND CONCEIT

Know that pride and self-importance are blameworthy traits and, in fact, enmity to God, may He be praised and exalted. Magnificence and grandeur are appropriate only for Him. For this reason, there are many reproaches for the tyrant and the arrogant in the Quran, as when He said: *Thus doth God print on every arrogant, disdainful heart* (Q. 40:35); and He said: *Then was disappointed every obdurate tyrant* (Q. 14:15); and He said through the voice of Moses (A): *"Lo! I seek refuge in my Lord and your Lord from every scorner who believes not in a Day of Reckoning."* (Q. 40:27)

The Messenger (S) said: "A person will not enter heaven who has in his soul pride in the amount of a grain or a mustard seed." And he (S) said: "There are people who make a business of self-importance until their names are recorded in the ledger of the tyrannical. They will receive the same punishment as do (the tyrants)."

In the Traditions, it is related that Solomon (A) commanded all the devils, jinn, fowl of the air, and mankind to come out. Two hundred thousand people and two hundred thousand jinn assembled upon his carpet.¹³¹⁸ He commanded the wind to lift it and carry it close to the sky so that they could hear the voices of angels and their glorifications. It landed upon the earth in order to reach the depths of the sea. At that moment, he heard a voice: "If there were one atom of pride in the soul of Solomon, I would have swallowed him up in the earth before I would have taken him into the air."

The Messenger (S) said: "The arrogant will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection in the shape of ants beneath the people's feet, so despised are they by God Most High." And he (S) said: "There is a valley in hell called Habhab. It is right for God Most High to place the arrogant there." Salman Farsi (R) said: "The sin for which no act of devotion has any profit is pride."

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High will not look upon a person whose clothing drags on the ground in the way of arrogance and swaggering in vainglory." And he (S) said: "Once a man was strutting and admiring his magnificent garments. God Most High had him swallowed into the earth and he is still there, until the Resurrection." And he said: "Whoever magnifies himself and struts upon the earth sees God Most High's anger at him on the Day of Resurrection."

¹³¹⁸ "his (Solomon's) carpet," upon which he and his court would fly through the air from place to place.

Muhammad bin Wasi' once saw his own son swaggering. He called him and said: "Dost thou have any idea who thou art? I bought thy mother with 200 dirhams and among the Muslims thy father is such that the fewer like him there are, the better!" Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah saw Muhallab¹³¹⁹ strutting about. He said: "Slave! God Most High holds such a manner of going in enmity." (Muhallab) replied: "Beware! Dost thou know me?" He answered: "I know thee: first thou wert a putrid fluid and at the end (thou wilt be) an infamous corpse. In between, (thou art) the carrier of pollutions."

THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY

The Messenger (S) said: "No one has behaved with humility whose honor God Most High did not increase." And he (S) said: "There is no person whose head does not have reins held by the hands of two angels. When he shows humility, the reins are pulled upward and they say: 'O Lord God! Exalt him!' If he shows haughtiness, they drag his head down and say: 'O Lord God! Disgrace him!'" And he (S) said: "Blessed is that person who behaves humbly not out of desperation, who spends the wealth he has accumulated not in sin, who shows mercy upon the helpless, and who converses with the wise and learned."

Abu Salamah Madani¹³²⁰ tells of his grandfather who said: "Once the Messenger (S) was our guest while he was fasting. We brought him a cup of milk for his breaking of the fast. When he tasted it and found it sweet, he asked: 'What is this?' We said: 'We have mixed honey in it.' He set it down and did not drink it, saying: 'I do not say that it is forbidden, but whoever is humble for the sake of God Most High, God Most High exalts him and gives him eminence. Whoever is proud God Most High throws down and despises. Whoever spends in moderation God Most High makes self-sufficient. Whoever spends immoderately God makes a pauper. Whoever remembers God Most High often, God Most High takes as His friend.'"

Once a poor man with sores came to the door of the Messenger (S) and begged. The Messenger (S) was eating. He called him in and drew him to himself. The Messenger (S) sat him against his own thigh and said: "Eat." One of the Quraysh deemed the man filthy and looked upon him with dislike; he did not die before being afflicted with the same calamity.

¹³¹⁹ Muhallab: al-Muhallab bin Abi Sufrah, Abū Sa'īd. He was a military officer who lived from about AH9/630CE to AH82/702CE. He led the invasion of Afghanistan and was the governor of Khorasan.

¹³²⁰ Abū Salamah Madani: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High gave me the choice between being a messenger as a servant or being a king as a prophet. I hesitated in this, and my friend among the angels, Gabriel, was present and I looked to him. He said: 'Humble thyself before God Most High.' I said: 'I desire to be a servant and a messenger.'" God Most High revealed to Moses (A): "I accept the formal prayer of the person who is humble and is not arrogant with My people and whose heart holds fear. He passes the day in the remembrance of Me and holds himself from (his) carnal appetites for My sake." And the Messenger (S) said: "Nobility lies in piety, honor lies in humility, and riches lie in certainty."

Jesus (A) said: "Blessed are the humble of this world for they shall be the possessors of the pulpits at the Resurrection."¹³²¹ Blessed are the persons who make peace among people in this world for their place shall be in Paradise.¹³²² Blessed are the persons whose hearts are unsullied by the world, for seeing God Most High shall be their spiritual reward."¹³²³

Said the Messenger (S): "Whomever God Most High has shown to the path to Islam, He has created in a good form and He has not made his condition such that He would be ashamed of him. Even though He has mixed his sustenance with humbleness, to God Most High he is one of the chosen."

Someone had prominent pockmarks and some people were eating. Whomever he sat beside would get up and move off. The Messenger (S) showed him to a place close to himself and said: "I like very much the person who takes his necessities in his hand and carries them to his home. They are the provisions for his family. For this reason pride departs from him." And he (S) said to the Companions: "Why is that I do not see the sweetness of worship upon you?" They asked: "What is the sweetness of worship?" He answered: "Humility." And he (S) said: "Whenever ye see a humble person be humble with him; when ye see the prideful, be proud so that their affront and baseness may be revealed."

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: 'Ayishah (R) says: "Ye are neglectful of the most excellent act of worship and that is humility." Fudayl (R) said: "Humility is that thou acceptest truth from whomever it may be, even a child or the most ignorant of people." Ibn al-Mubarak (R) says: "Humility is that thou considerest thyself lower than whoever has fewer of the things of the world than thou dost, so as to show him that thou dost not give thyself any value because of (thy) worldly goods, and that thou considerest thyself above anyone who has more of the world

¹³²¹ Cf., "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 5:3)

¹³²² Cf., "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Mt. 5:9)

¹³²³ Cf., "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Mt. 5:8)

than thou, so as to show him that he has no value to thee because of his worldly goods."

God Most High revealed to Jesus (A): "Whenever I send thee a comfort, if thou comest before that humbly, I shall perfect that comfort upon thee." Ibn Sammak (R) used to say to Harun al-Rashid every day: "O Commander of the Believers! Thy humility lies in thine honor; it is more honorable than honor." (Harun) said: "Thou hast spoken very well." Then (Ibn Sammak) said: "O Commander of the Believers! To whomever God Most High has given wealth, beauty, and retinue and who does good with that wealth, is humble amidst his retinue, and is abstemious in his beauty; his name is recorded in the ledger of God Most High among the pure." Harun called for pen and paper and wrote down those words. Solomon (A) used to enquire of the rich in his kingdom in the morning, then he would sit with the poor. He used to say: "I am a pauper, a pauper as much as ye (are)."

Some of the saints have spoken about humility:

Hasan Basri (R) said: "Humility is that when thou comest out of thy house thou seest no one whom thou dost not consider superior to thyself." Malik bin Dinar (R) said: "If they cry from the top of the gate of the mosque: 'Let the worst of you come out,' no one will get himself in front of me, except by force." Ibn Mubarak heard this. He said: "The greatness of Malik was due to this." Someone came to Shibli, may God have mercy upon him. (Shibli) asked: "What art thou?"¹³²⁴ He answered: "I am that dot which is placed under (the letter) 'b';¹³²⁵ that is, there is nothing lower than I." (Shibli) said: "*May God destroy thy self-interest! May God carry off thy self from before thee, for thou hast caused thy self to alight in another place!*" One of the saints saw 'Ali (R) in a dream. He asked him to give him advice: He said: "How good is the humility of the rich before the poor for sake of the spiritual reward of the Hereafter! How much better is the pride of the poor, confident of the grace of God Most High, with the rich!"

Yahya bin Khalid¹³²⁶ (R): "When a generous person becomes pious, he becomes humble. When the fool or the ignoble becomes pious,

¹³²⁴ "What art thou?" The text gives the question twice, first in Arabic (*mā anta?*) and then in Persian (*tū chih-ī?*).

¹³²⁵ The letter *b* in Arabic and languages written with a script based upon Arabic, such as Persian and Urdu, has a single dot under it.

¹³²⁶ Yahyā bin Khālīd: of the famous Barmakid family (of Zoroastrian origin in northern Afghanistan) of ministers in Baghdad, especially in connection with Harun al-Rashid. His father Khalid had joined the revolt against the Umayyads which led to the establishment of the 'Abbasid dynasty of caliphs at Baghdad. Yahya was Harun's tutor. At the fall of the Barmakids, Yahya was imprisoned at Raqqah near Baghdad and all of his wealth was confiscated. He died AH180/805CE.

arrogance appears in him." Bayazid¹³²⁷ (R) says: "Until a servant (of God) considers no person worse than himself, he is prideful." One day Junayd said during the Friday assembly: "If it were not in the Traditions that at the end of time the elders of the people would be the most ignoble of them, I would not consider it right to address the congregation." Junayd (R) says: "To the people of the Unity of God, humility is pride. That is, humility is that one lower oneself, and since there is a need to keep low, one places one's self in a place so that one may then lower (oneself)." Whenever there was a wind or thunder, 'Ata-yi Sullami (R) would rise and, placing his hands on his belly like a pregnant woman, say: "Ah! That which comes upon people is all because of my inauspiciousness." Some people bragged in the presence of Salman. He said: "My beginning is a clot (of semen) and my end is carrion. Then, the worse from the better will appear at the scales, and the noble from the ignoble, which is I."¹³²⁸

DISCLOSING THE TRUTH OF PRIDE AND ITS HARM

Know that pride is a trait of character, and character is an attribute of the soul, but its effect becomes evident on the exterior. The characteristic of pride is that one holds oneself before others and considers oneself better. From this a joyous puffing up appears in one. That puffing up which appears in him is called "pride." The Messenger (S) said: "*I seek refuge with Thee from the puffing up of pride.*"¹³²⁹ When this puffing up appears in him, he considers others less than himself and looks upon them as servants. It may be that he not recognize his own servants and say: "Who art thou to be fit to serve me?" Just as the caliphs do not grant permission for everyone to kiss their threshold, nor do they write "(thy) servant,"¹³³⁰ except to kings. This is the ultimate pride and reaches the grandeur of God Most High, for He receives everyone in (their) servitude and prostration. If one does not reach that level, he seeks

¹³²⁷ Bāyazīd: Tayfūr bin 'Īsā bin Sarwishān Bistāmī. One of the greatest of the Sufi shaykhs, he was called the "Sultan of the Cognizant" (*sultān al-ʿarīfīn*). His father was a merchant of Bistam in north central Iran. After studying there, he went to Syria to continue his studies, remaining there 30 years and practicing asceticism. Many miracles are attributed to him. He died AH261/874-5CE.

¹³²⁸ In a note, HK observes that in the *Arabic Revival*, the corresponding text reads: "The Quraysh were contending for glory before Salman. He said: "But I have been created from a drop of uncleanness. Then I shall become rotting carrion. Then the referral will be to the scales. If (the pan of my good deeds) is heavy, then I am noble. And, if it is light, I am blameworthy."

¹³²⁹ Ghazzali adds a Persian translation of the Arabic sentence.

¹³³⁰ That is, when writing to others, they do not call themselves "servant" (*bandah*), as is the usual custom in formal situations, and as it was, until recently, the custom in English letters to close with "Your servant," "Obediently yours," etc.

precedence in going and sitting. He expects respect. It gets to the point where, if he is advised, he does not accept it, but when he himself gives advice, he speaks harshly. If he is instructed, he becomes angry. He looks upon people as he looks upon beasts.

The Messenger (S) was asked: "What is pride?" He replied: "That one not submit to God and one look upon people with contempt." These two traits are heavy veils between one and God Most High. From them, all unseemly traits of character are born and one remains deprived of all good traits. Whoever is conquered by lordship, self-love, and self-importance cannot approve of that which he approves for himself for the Muslims—and this is not the way of the believers. And he cannot humble himself before another—and this is not the attribute of the pious. He cannot restrain his animus and envy. He cannot swallow his anger. He cannot withhold his tongue from backbiting, nor can he cleanse his soul from deceit and spite, for his soul is seized by hatred for anyone who does not bow to him.

The least of this is that he is engaged daily with self-adoration and self-promotion. He does not omit fraud, lies, or hypocrisy in order to promote himself in the eyes of people. The truth is that no one smells the perfume of being a Muslim so long as he does not forget himself. Indeed, neither does he obtain the ease of the world. One of the saints said: "If ye wish to smell the scent of heaven, consider yourself lower than all mankind so as to smell the scent of heaven."

If a person is granted the vision to see what is inside the hearts of those two arrogant persons when they meet, there is not in any dunghill the stench and ignominy which is in their hearts. Internally, they have the shapes of dogs and externally they adorn themselves as do women. They do not possess that companionability which Muslims have when they sit together. Indeed, thou findest tranquillity when thy totality is lost in whomever thou seest, and all becomes homage to him, until duality departs. He remains and thou dost not remain, or he is lost in thee and thou remainest, but he does not. Or, both of yourselves are lost in God Most High, and ye do not pay attention to yourselves. This is perfection. Perfection will necessarily come from this singularity. In sum, as long as there is duality, there can be no tranquillity. Tranquillity lies in the Oneness (of God) and singularity. This is the truth of pride and its harm.

DISCLOSING THE DEGREES OF PRIDE

Know that some kinds of pride are more flagrant and greater than others. The difference arises from the fact that arrogance has three aspects: with respect to God Most High, the Messenger (S), or people.

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is arrogance with respect to God Most High, such as the pride of Nimrod, Pharaoh, and Iblis, and those who have claimed divinity, and (those who) have considered servitude to God

Most High demeaning. God Most High said: *The Messiah will never scorn to be a servant of God, nor will the angels who are near (to Him).* (Q. 4:172) Neither Jesus (A) nor the proximate angels disdain serving (God).

THE SECOND DEGREE is arrogance with respect to the Messenger of God Most High, such as the unbelieving Quraysh who said: "We shall not bow to a person like ourselves. Why is an angel not sent to us?" Or: "Why was someone powerful not sent? An orphan¹³³¹ was sent!" And *they say: 'If only this Quran had been revealed to some great man of the two towns!'* (Q. 43:31)¹³³² They were of two groups: for one group their pride became a veil so that they did not ponder and they did not recognize his Messengership; as when He said: *I shall turn away from My revelations those who magnify themselves wrongfully in the earth.* (Q. 7:146) He said: "I shall permit the proud to see the signs of truth." Another group knew, but rejected him. Because of their pride, they could not bring themselves to admit it, as when He said: *And they denied (the signs), though their souls acknowledged them, out of spite and arrogance.* (Q. 27:14)

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one be haughty with other servants (of God) and look upon them with contempt. He does not concede their rights, considers himself better than they, and puffs himself up. This, even though it is lower than the other two degrees, is nonetheless important for two reasons:

ONE (REASON) is that greatness¹³³³ is an attribute of God Most High. A weak, helpless man has nothing of his affair in his own hands. Whence comes greatness that a person (dare) consider himself its possessor? If he thinks himself great, he contends with God Most High in His attributes. He is like the slave who places a royal crown upon his head and sits upon a throne. Look at how deserving of loathing and punishment he becomes! Concerning this, God Most High said: *Greatness is a loincloth and majesty a robe; I have shattered whoever vies with Me in these two (attributes).*¹³³⁴ He said: "Greatness and majesty are My special attributes. I shall destroy whoever vies with Me in them."¹³³⁵ So, since pride over (His) servants is not fitting for anyone save the Creator, if one of His servants is overbearing to Him, he will

¹³³¹ The Prophet (S) was an orphan. His father 'Abdullah died on a trading expedition to Syria before his birth. He lost his mother when he was six years old.

¹³³² "the two towns": Makkah and Ta'if, a city about 40 miles east of Makkah.

¹³³³ It should be pointed out that many of the words used in Persian meaning "pride, proud, arrogance," etc., such as: *kibr, takabbur, kibriyā*?, *mutakabbir*, etc., derive from the Arabic trilateral root *k-b-r* with the general meaning of largeness. Pride is equated with self-magnification. The Persian for "big, great, large" is *buzurg*, and *buzurgī* for "bigness, greatness, largeness."

¹³³⁴ This is not a verse of the Quran.

¹³³⁵ This is Ghazzali's interpretation in Persian of the preceding sentence in Arabic.

have competed with Him, just as when someone commands the personal slaves of the king, which is not proper for anyone other than the king.

ANOTHER REASON is that this pride is an obstacle preventing the acceptance of truth from others. When a people have this trait, they dispute about questions of religion. When the truth appears on the tongue of one, pride prompts the others to deny it and not to accept it. These are the traits of the hypocrites and the unbelievers, as God Most High said concerning the unbelievers: *Those who disbelieve say: 'Heed not this Quran, and drown out the hearing of it; haply ye may prevail.'* (Q. 41:26) And as He said: *And when it is said to him: "Be careful of thy duty to God, pride takes him to sin."* (Q. 2:206) When it is said to one: "Fear God Most High," his self-importance and self-esteem prompt him to persist in sin. Ibn Mas'ud (R) say: "It is the perfection of sin to say to someone: 'Fear God Most High.' He replies: 'Mind thine own affair.'" One time, the Messenger (S) said to someone: "Eat with thy right hand." (The other) replied: "I cannot." (The Messenger) said: "May he not be able to do it!" for he knew that the man had spoken out of pride. His hand became limp so that it no longer moved.

Know that the story of Iblis has been related to thee not as a tale, but so that thou may know to what the harm of pride leads. It was because of pride that he said: "*I am better than he.*"¹³³⁶ *Thou didst create me of fire, while Thou didst create him of clay.*" (Q. 38:76) His pride led him to the point of arrogance with respect to the command of God Most High and he did not prostrate himself¹³³⁷ so that he became accursed for eternity.

DISCLOSING THE CAUSES OF PRIDE AND THEIR TREATMENT

Know that whoever behaves arrogantly thinks that he has a quality that others do not have. That quality is perfection, and there are seven causes of that:

THE FIRST CAUSE of pride lies in knowledge, for when the learned person sees himself as being adorned with perfect knowledge, he considers others beasts in comparison with himself. Pride dominates him. Its effect is that he has an expectation that people should assist, serve and show homage to him, and he desires precedence. He is astonished if they do not offer that. If he looks at them or is invited by someone, he considers it a great favor (he does) to him. He puts people under obligation for his knowledge and in his talking about the Hereafter. He

¹³³⁶ "him" refers to Adam. God created Iblis (Satan) out of fire, while He created man out of clay. For this reason, Iblis considered himself superior to man.

¹³³⁷ After creating Adam, God commanded the angels to prostrate themselves to him. They all obeyed with the exception of Iblis, who was for this reason cast out of heaven.

does not think himself one of them and he is more hopeful about his own affair (at the Resurrection). He fears more for them than for himself. He says: "Everyone needs my supplications and my piety and shall escape hell through me." For this reason, said the Messenger (S): "*The blight of knowledge is conceit.*"

Truly, it is preferable to call such a person ignorant rather than learned, for true knowledge is that which makes known the danger of the affair of Hereafter to one and (makes one) recognize the narrowness of the Straight Path. Whoever has learned this sees himself far away from that (goal) and considers himself guilty. Out of the danger to his own fate and the fear that his knowledge will be a proof (against him), he does not engage in pridefulness. As Abu Darda (R) said: "With the addition of every bit of knowledge, a bit of pain is added." As for those persons who acquire knowledge and whose pride increases, there are two aspects:

ONE is that they do not learn true knowledge, which is the knowledge of religion. That is a knowledge by which one comes to know oneself and to discern the hindrances on the way of faith, the peril of the outcome, and the veil of God Most High. This knowledge increases the pain (of the consequences of one's sins) and humility, not pride. But, when one learns medical science, mathematics, astronomy,¹³³⁸ language, and the science of debate and contradicting, from these nothing is increased save pride. Close to the science of religion is the science of legal decrees (based upon Islamic Law).¹³³⁹ That is the science of the reform of the people of the world. Therefore, it is a worldly science, even though there is a need for religion in it; fear does not arise from it. Indeed, when it stands by itself and does not call in other sciences, the soul becomes dark and pride triumphs. *There is not information like examination.* Study these people to see how they are. And in the same way, the knowledge of the flights of the reciters of the remembrance of God with their rhymed prose and idle talk, and their searching words that bring people to crying out, and the subtleties by which they excite extremism among the sects so that the common folk suppose that that is the path of religion—all of these sow the seeds of pride, envy, and enmity in their souls. There is no increase from this pain and affliction: instead, the puffing up of hubris and pride is augmented.

THE OTHER ASPECT is that it may happen that a person study some beneficial science, such as the commentary of the Quran, the Traditions, the biographies of the forefathers—and studies of this kind which we have mentioned in this book and in the volumes of *The*

¹³³⁸ "astronomy" (*‘ilm-i nujūm*): In Ghazzali's time, this was more concerned with astrology than purely scientific astronomical observations, although almost incidentally considerable astronomical knowledge was collected.

¹³³⁹ Legal decisions (*fatāwā*) concerning religious matters issued by a *mufti*, a qualified expounder of Islamic law.

Revival, and the like—and still be arrogant. The reason for this is that his inner self is in essence malicious and he has a bad character. His aim in studying these sciences and his reciting them is to assume them, not to exercise piety. When knowledge enters him, it assumes the character of his inner being, as when medicine enters into the stomach, before it can act, it changes according to the character of the stomach, as pure water which falls from the sky in one character increases the properties of whatever plant it reaches. If what it reaches is bitter, it becomes more bitter; if what it reaches is sweet, it becomes sweeter.

Ibn 'Abbas (R) relates that the Messenger (S) said: "There are a people who recite the Quran and it does not pass their throats. They say: 'Who reads the Quran as we do and knows what we know?'" Then he looked at the Companions and said: "They may be from amongst you and my people, and they will all be firewood in hell."

'Umar (R) said: "Do not be among the tyrants of the learned, for then your knowledge will not be faithful to your ignorance." God Most High commanded the Messenger (S) to be humble and said: *And lower thy wing (in kindness) to those who follow thee.* (Q. 26:215) It was for this reason that the Companions guarded themselves against pride. Once Hudhayfah (R) was made the imam. Then, he said: "Seek another leader, because it occurs to me in my heart that I am superior to you." When (the Companions) were so fearful of the prideful thought, how will others be saved? Where can such a learned person be found in such an era (as this)?¹³⁴⁰ Indeed, rare is the scholar who knows that this trait is blameworthy and that one must shun it, for most are those who are negligent about this and glory in their own arrogance, saying: "I give so-and-so no importance and do not esteem him. I do not give him any regard," and the like.

Consequently, if a person has an awareness of these points, he is extremely valuable and visiting him is an act of worship. All should regard him as a blessing. If not, it is that which is in the Traditions: "There will come a time when whoever does one tenth of your acts will achieve salvation," as though it were the fear of hopelessness. However, a little in this (our) era is much, for no companion has remained in religion and the truths of religion have become obliterated. Most of those who travel the way are alone and have no companion. One's sorrow is doubled. So, one must content oneself with religion, *God Most High willing*.

THE SECOND CAUSE of pride is asceticism and worship. For, the worshipper, the ascetic, and the Sufi are not without pride in that they

¹³⁴⁰ Ghazzali is referring to his own period, but the caution is appropriate for all periods, including our own.

consider it preferable that others greet and visit them, and, one might say, they place an obligation upon the people from (their) acts of worship. It may be that they suppose that others have been ruined while "he is safe and alive." It may be that if a person troubles him and some calamity befalls (that person), he attribute that to his own miraculous powers and imagine that that (calamity) was for his sake!

The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever says that the people have been ruined is himself ruined; that is, he looks upon the people with contempt." And he (S) said: "It is an absolute sin for a person to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. There is a great difference between him and the person who gives him a blessing, while (that person) considers him better than himself and loves him for the sake of God Most High. It is feared that God Most High may grant (the other) his degree and deprive him of the blessing of his own worship. As, among the Children of Israel there was a man—there was none more worshipful (than he), and there was another—there was none more sinning (than he). This devotee was sitting and a bit of cloud was stopped over his head.¹³⁴¹ The sinner said: 'I'll go and sit by him so that perhaps God Most High have mercy upon me for his sake.' When he sat close to him, the devotee said to himself: 'What has he right to sit beside me when there is none more wicked than he?' (Aloud) he said: 'Get up and be off from me. O sinner!' (The sinner) rose and the cloud went together with him. A revelation came to the messenger of that era: 'Say to both to begin their work anew, for We have forgiven him who had sinned because of his good faith, and whatever the devotee had accomplished We have canceled because of his pride.'

Someone put his foot on the neck of a devotee.¹³⁴² (The devotee) said: "Take it off; for, by God, God will not have mercy upon thee." A revelation came: "Say unto him: 'O thou who, with thine oath, command Me not to forgive him. Instead, I shall not forgive thee.'" It is usually the case that every devotee who is distressed by someone thinks that God Most High will not have mercy upon (his tormentor). Perhaps he says: "He will quickly see the retribution for that!" When some harm comes to (that person), he says: "Dost thou see what happened to him?" That is: "It was because of my miraculous powers!" This fool does not know that many unbelievers tormented the Messenger (S) from whom God Most

¹³⁴¹ The worshipper was sitting in the shade of a stationary bit of cloud, a sign of divine favor.

¹³⁴² The curious reader may well wonder how the devotee had found himself in such an unfortunate predicament. In the *Arabic Revival*, of which the *Alchemy* is a Persian summary, Ghazzali gives a fuller version of the story: "It is related that a man from the Children of Israel came to a devotee of the Children of Israel. He placed his foot on (the devotee's) neck while he was prostrating himself (in prayer). He said: 'Raise thy foot! For by God, God will not forgive thee.' A revelation came....," etc. (*Revival*)

High did not exact revenge, and for some of them He appointed (the acceptance of) Islam. He thinks that he is more beloved than the messengers are and that He would take revenge for him! Ignorant devotees are so. (But) the perspicacious are thus: they think that whatever calamity befalls mankind is from the inauspiciousness of their¹³⁴³ hypocrisy and their shortcomings.

When 'Umar (R) with all of that truthfulness and sincerity that he had, asks Hudhayfah (R): "Dost thou see the sign of hypocrisy upon me?" then, the believer must always practice piety and always fear, while the foolish devotee performs the external rites with a soul tainted with the filth of pride and conceit, and he does not fear that. Truly, anyone who is certain that he is superior to others has by that ignorance nullified his own acts of worship, for there is no sin greater than ignorance. One day the Companions (R) were heaping praises upon a man. By chance, that man appeared there. They said: "O Messenger of God! This is the good man we were just talking about." The Messenger (S) said: "I see the tokens of hypocrisy in him." They were astonished. When he reached the Messenger (S), the Messenger said to him: "By the God Who is over thee, speak the truth: dost thou ever think that there is no one of these people better than thee?" He replied. "Yes." Then the Messenger (S) said: "This wickedness is inside him; I saw it upon him with the light of prophethood and it is called hypocrisy." This is a great blight upon the learned and the devotees, and they are divided into three classes:

THE FIRST CLASS is that the soul cannot be emptied of it, but one shows humility by effort. That is, he is acting as though he considers others better than himself so that it does not appear in any form in his transactions or speech. This man cannot uproot the tree of pride from his inner self, but he cuts off all of its branches.

THE SECOND CLASS is that one restrains his tongue so as not to reveal it and says: "I consider myself to be behind everyone," but in his behavior and actions things appear that are signs of internal pride; as, wherever he is, he seeks the place of honor and walks in front. The one who is learned turns his head to one side as though he disdains mankind. The one who is a devotee has a sour expression on his face, as though he were angry with mankind. Both of these fools do not know that knowledge and deeds are neither in arrogance nor in peevishness. Rather, they are in the soul and, externally, its radiance is all humility, compassion, and cheerfulness.

The Messenger (S) was the most knowing) and most judicious of mankind. No one was more humble and more cheerful than he. He never looked upon anyone, except with smiles and cheerfulness. With all of that, he was addressed (by God): *And lower thy wing (in kindness) to*

¹³⁴³ "their": this refers to the perspicacious, not mankind in general.

those who follow thee. (Q. 26:215) And He said: *It was by the mercy of God that thou (O Muhammad) wast lenient with them, for if thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart, they would have dispersed from round about thee.* (Q. 3:159) It is from the mercy of God Most High that thou wert cheerful, mild, and friendly, lest they dislike thee.¹³⁴⁴

THE THIRD CLASS is those who reveal it with their speech, who glorify and flaunt themselves, who sing their own praises and make claims to states and miracles. The devotee says: "Who is so-and-so? What are his acts of worship? I am always fasting and I keep vigil every night and recite the whole Quran every day. No one intends any trouble for me but he is destroyed! So-and-so gave me trouble and he saw what happened; his wealth and children were destroyed." It may be that he competes well, so that if he sees some people performing the night formal prayers, he performs more until they are left helpless. If they are fasting, he sits hungry for a time.

As for the scholar, he declares: "I know so many varieties of knowledge. What does so-and-so know? Who was his teacher?" If he debates, he strives to take his opponent prisoner, even if (his words) be false. Night and day, he busies himself learning phrases, words, and bizarre rhymed prose in order to use them in assemblies to attract attention to himself. Perhaps, he learns some obscure words, technical terms, or traditions in order to overcome others and display their deficiencies. Which scholar or devotee is it that is devoid of such thoughts, in a lesser or greater degree?

So, when one sees this and hears that the Messenger (S) says: "Whoever has a single kernel of pride in his soul will be deprived of Paradise," and (pride) will increase nothing for him save pain, sorrow and fear, he will not take to arrogance and will know that God Most High says: "Thou hast a value for Me, even if thou hast no value in thine own opinion. If thou believest thyself to be valuable, thou art without value to Me." Whoever has not perceived these truths of religion is better called an ignoramus rather than a scholar.

THE THIRD CAUSE is pride of ancestry, as some who are 'Alawis,¹³⁴⁵ or highborn suppose that the people are their clients and slaves, even though they be pious and intelligent. They harbor this pride inside themselves even if they do not express it, but when anger appears, it is exposed and shows itself in speech and behavior. They say: "What worth and dignity dost thou have that thou speakest to me? Dost thou not know thy place?" and the like.

¹³⁴⁴ Ghazzali's paraphrase of the preceding Quranic verse.

¹³⁴⁵ 'Alawis: descendants of 'Ali.

Abu Dharr (R) said: "Someone was fighting with me. I said: 'O son of a black woman!' The Messenger (S) said: 'Do not overdo it, for no white child has a superiority over a black child, except when he is ahead in piety.'" Abu Dharr (R) said: "I lay down and said to that man: 'Place the sole of thy foot on me.'" ¹³⁴⁶ Behold! When he realized that it was pride (that had made him speak thus), how he humbled himself in order to shatter that pride!

Two men were boasting in the presence of the Messenger (S). One said: "I am the son of so-and-so, (the son of) so-and-so; who art thou?" The Messenger (S) said: "Two persons flaunted themselves before Moses (A). One said: 'I am the son of so-and-so (the son of) so-and-so,' and he enumerated his great ancestors to the ninth generation. Revelation came to Moses (A): 'Say to him that all nine of them are in hell and thou wilt be the tenth of them.'" And the Messenger (S) said: "Cease boasting about people who have become charcoal in hell. If not, thou wilt be lower than those beetles that—seeing a person's feces—smell and taste them."

THE FOURTH CAUSE of pride is beauty. This is more common among women, as 'Ayishah (R) said about a woman: "She is short." The Messenger (S) said: "Thou hast backbitten her, and this was because of thine own stature. If thou hadst been short, thou wouldst not have said that."

THE FIFTH CAUSE of pride is wealth. One says: "My property and comfort are thus while thou art a beggar and penniless. If I wanted to, I could buy so many slaves like thee," and the like. The story of the two brothers ¹³⁴⁷ in *The Cave* (Q. 18:32-44), when one of them said: '*I am more than thee in wealth and mightier in the respect of men,*' (Q. 18:34) ¹³⁴⁸ was to this purpose.

THE SIXTH CAUSE of pride is power over the weak.

THE SEVENTH CAUSE of pride is (having) followers, students, slaves, servants, and disciples. In all, everything that a person considers a

¹³⁴⁶ "on me" (*bar rūyi-man*): the phrase could also be rendered "upon my face."

¹³⁴⁷ Ghazzali calls them brothers (*barādar*), but the passage in the Quran, using the dual form, refers to them as two men (*rajulayn*).

¹³⁴⁸ The parable tells of two men both blessed with fruitful gardens. One brags of his blessings to the other and has even greater expectations for the next life, while the other disputes with him and berates him for his boasting, warning him that the blessings of the world are subject to loss. Then, the braggart's garden was beset calamities and all was lost. He then realizes the error of his ways.

comfort and takes pride in, even if there is no comfort, so that a eunuch too boasts for reasons of his eunuchism to other eunuchs.

These are the causes of arrogance. However, the reason it becomes disclosed are enmities and envy, for every person who has an enemy wishes to vaunt himself over him. It may be that the cause is hypocrisy, for one takes to vaunting oneself before people in order to be admired, so that if one argues with someone whom one knows to be superior to one, one is humbled inside oneself, but acts arrogantly so that the people not know (of one's inferiority to the other). Now, since thou hast learned the causes, the treatment must be learned.

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT OF PRIDE

Know that the treatment of an illness which, in the amount of a grain, will close off the path of happiness to one and exclude one from heaven, is an individual obligation. No person is free of this illness, and its treatment is of two kinds: one is general and the other particular:

AS FOR THE GENERAL TREATMENT, is a compound of theory and practice:

AS FOR THE THEORETICAL: it is that one come to know God Most High so that one understands that pride and greatness are not attainable and are not appropriate to anyone but to Him. He should know himself in order to understand that there is no person and no thing more humble, more contemptible, more base, and more detestable than he. This is a purgative that will expel the root and substance of the sickness from within. If a person desires to know the totality of this, one passage from the Quran is sufficient, that which He said: *Perish man! How ungrateful he is! From what thing doth He create him? From a drop of sperm, He creates him and gives proportion to him. Then, He makes the way easy for him; then, He causes him to die and consigns him to the grave; then, when He wills, He raises him to life again.* (Q. 80:14-22) God Most High has described the amount of (man's) own capacity to him, and has declared the beginning, the end, and the middle of his affair.

As for the beginning, He said: *"From a drop of sperm."* One must understand that nothing is or exists more worthless than semen. (A person) is non-existent. He has no name or particulars. He is in the concealment of non-existence, in eternities without beginning or end until the time of creation, as He said: *Has there come upon man a period of time in which he was a thing unremembered?* (Q. 76:1) So God Most High created earth, which is not more contemptible than he, and sperm and a clot of blood, which is bit of blood and liquid, and there is nothing more unclean than that. He made him be out of non-being. And He made (man's) origin lowly earth, putrid liquid, and unclean blood. He was a

lump of flesh without hearing, sight, speech, strength, and motion. Rather, he was an inanimate thing unaware of itself until something else touched it. Then He created for him hearing, sight, taste, speech, power, arms and legs, eyes, and all (his) organs; suchlike that he sees there was nothing of these in the earth, nor in the sperm, nor in the blood. And, He created in him so many wonders and marvelous things so that he might know the beauty, majesty and grandeur of the Creator through them, not that he boast of them. For, it was not through his own effort that they were caused so that he should boast of them. As He said: *And of His signs is this: He created you of dust, and behold ye are human beings, dispersing (everywhere)! (Q. 30:20)* This is the beginning of his affair. Behold! Is there room for pride—or room for being ashamed of himself?

As for the middle of his affair, it is that He brought him into this world and nurtured (him) for a while. And He gave him faculties and limbs. If He had put his affair into his own hands and had made him self-sufficient, it would have been permissible for him to fall into error and imagine that he is someone; but, He did not do this either. Instead, He suspended hunger, thirst, sickness, heat, cold, pain, sorrow, and a hundred thousand calamities over his head so that he would never be certain of himself at any hour. Perhaps he will die, or go blind, or become deaf, or go mad, or become ill, or be wounded, or perish from hunger and thirst. (God) has made his benefit to lie in bitter medicines, so that if they are beneficial, at the same time he suffers. And He has placed his detriment in good things, so that if he finds pleasure, he also suffers from them. He has not placed anything of his affair in his hand, so that what he wants to know, he does not know, and what he wants to forget, he cannot. What he does not want to think about overwhelms his heart, and what he wants to think about takes flight from his heart. With all of these wonders of artifice, perfection, and beauty with which He has created him, He has made him so impotent that there is nothing more unfortunate, more ignoble, and more helpless than he.

As for his end, it is that when he dies, neither hearing, nor sight, nor strength, nor beauty, nor body, nor organs will remain. Rather, he will become stinking carrion at which all will hold their noses. He will become a defilement in the grave, the ambition of worms and the insects of the earth. Then, he will become dust, humble and base. If he remained thus, he would have profited and be the equal of the beast, but he has not found even this good fortune. Instead, he is gathered at the Resurrection, and held in a stopping place of awe. He sees the heavens split asunder, the stars thrown down, the sun and moon eclipsed, the mountains like carded wool, and the earth transformed. The guardians of hell throw nooses, hell roars, and the angels place the records of their deeds in their hands, one by one, so that he sees all that he has done of infamous acts and shameful deeds in his lifetime. He reads them one by one and is put to shame. They say: "Come and give answer! Why didst

thou say this? Why didst thou do that? Why didst thou eat this? Why didst thou sit down? Why didst thou stand up? Why didst thou look at that? Why didst thou think this?" Then, if—and *God is (our) Refuge*—he is not able to come through this, he is cast into hell and he says: "Would that I had been a swine, a dog, or dust: for they have been spared all of this punishment."

What room is there for arrogance and what cause for pride in a person whose condition may possibly be worse than that of a dog or a pig? If all the particles of heaven and earth mourn his suffering and misfortune, and the scroll of his ignominies and shameful acts is read, they would still fall short. Hast thou ever seen that when a king seizes someone for a crime and imprisons him and he is in danger of being hanged and turned into an exemplary punishment that he occupies himself in prison with boasting and pridefulness? All mankind in this world are in the prison of the King of the Universe. They have committed many crimes and do not know the outcome. What place is there for pride and boasting in such circumstances? Whosoever has known himself to be thus, that (self)-knowledge will be his purgative. It will completely tear out the roots of pride from within him so that he sees nothing viler than himself. Instead, he wishes that he were dust, or a bird, or a solid object that would not be in such peril.

AS FOR THE PRACTICAL TREATMENT, it is that one take up the way of the humble in all circumstances and actions, as the Messenger (S) would eat his bread upon the earth and would not recline. He would say: "I am a servant and I eat as servants do." Salman (R) was asked: "Why dost thou not wear fine clothing?" He answered: "I am a slave. If, one day, I am freed in the Hereafter, I shall not be without fine clothing."

Know that one of the secrets of formal prayer is the humility that is obtained in the bowing and the prostration when one places his face, the most treasured (part of the body), upon the earth, which is more humble. The pride of the Arabs was such that they would not bend their backs before anyone; therefore, this prostration was a great victory over them. So, one must oppose everything which commands pride. Pride appears on the face, on the tongue, in the eye, in sitting, in clothing, and in all activities and rests. One must drive all (such behavior) away from oneself with perseverance, until (doing so) becomes natural.

The effects of pride are many: one is that (a person) desires not to go about alone, so that no one is with him.¹³⁴⁹ One must avoid this. Hasan Basri (R) would not allow anyone to accompany him. He would say: "My soul does not remain settled with *that*." Abu Darda (R) says: "The more that people go about with thee, the farther thou goest from

¹³⁴⁹ The reference is to an entourage.

God Most High." The Messenger (S) used to walk in the midst of a group of people; sometimes it would happen that he would send them on ahead.

Another is that (a person) desires that people stand in his presence and rise for him. The Messenger (S) disliked it when anyone stood up for him. 'Ali, may God honor him, says: "Say to whoever desires to see hell: 'Look at a man who is seated while another stands before him.'"

Another is that, out of pride, one does not visit a person. Sufyan Thawri (R) arrived in Makkah. Ibrahim Adham (R) called him: "Come and relate Traditions to us!" Sufyan came and Ibrahim said: "I wanted to display again his humility."

Another is that one desires that a poor man not sit near him. The Messenger (S) used to give his hand to the poor person. He would let it remain until the man released it. He would break bread with whoever was sick or injured, for (reason of) which others would avoid him.

Another is that one not do any work in one's home. The Messenger (S) used to work in the house. 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz¹³⁵⁰ had a guest. The lamp went out. The guest said: "Shall I get some oil?" ('Umar) said: "No, for ordering a guest about is not generous." He said: "Shall I awaken the servant?" ('Umar) said: "No. Sleep takes precedence, and he is sleeping." Then, he himself rose and brought a container and poured oil into (the lamp). The guest said: "O Commander of the Believers, didst thou rise and do it?" He said: "Yes. I was 'Umar when I went and I have come back 'Umar."

Another is that one does not pick up one's necessities and carry them home. The Messenger (S) picked something up to carry it home. Someone wanted to send it (home) for him so that he would not have to carry it. (The Messenger) did not permit him and said: "It is better for the owner of the goods (to do that)." Abu Hurayrah (R) had put some firewood on his shoulders and was passing through the market, saying: "Make way for the commander!" At that time, he was a commander. 'Umar (R) would go into the market carrying meat in his left hand and a whip in his right hand.

Another is that one does not go out until his clothing is well arranged. 'Umar bin al-Khattab (R) was seen in the market with a whip and fourteen patches sewn on his loin wrapper, some of them of old silk. 'Ali, the Commander of the Believers, (R) had a short old garment. He was rebuked (for wearing that). He said: "In this way the soul is humbled. Others will follow (my) example and the souls of the poor will be happy." Tawus (R) said: "When I wash my clothing, I do not get my heart back for several days, until it has become dirty again. That is,

¹³⁵⁰ 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz: See 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz (Note 784).

(when wearing freshly washed clothes) I find a languor and a pride in my heart." 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz used to buy clothing for a thousand dinars before becoming caliph. He used to say: "It is very fine, it should be softer than this." After he succeeded to the caliphate, his clothing would be purchased for five dirhams. He would say: "It is good, but it should be coarser than this." Then, he was asked: "What is this?" He said: "God Most High has given me a self which savors and yearns. Whatever it tastes it yearns for another degree (beyond that), until now (it has tasted) the caliphate, beyond which there is no other rank. So now, it yearns for eternal kingship¹³⁵¹ and is seeking that."

Do not suppose that fine clothes are all out of pride, for there is the person who likes the good in everything. Its sign is that he likes it in private as well. And there is the person who shows his pride by means of old clothes in order to present himself as an ascetic. Jesus (A) said: "What is it that ye wear the clothes of the pious while ye have made your insides in the image of wolves? Put on royal garments and soften your hearts with the fear of God Most High."¹³⁵²

'Umar (R) arrived in Syria wearing old, dusty clothes. They said: "There are many enemies here. What harm will there be if thou puttest on finer clothing?" He replied: "God Most High has honored us with Islam; we should not seek honor in any other thing."

To summarize, whoever wants to learn humility, must study the manner of the life¹³⁵³ of Mustafa (S) and follow his example. Abu Sa'id Khudri (R) says: "The Messenger (S) would feed animals and tether camels, sweep his house, milk sheep, stitch (his) shoes, and patch (his) clothing. He ate with his servants and when the servant became tired from grinding, he would assist him. He would buy from the market and wrap (his purchases) in a corner of his wrapper and bring them home. He was the first to greet the poor and the rich, the small and the great, and would give them his hand. He would make no distinction between freeman and slave, black or white, or poor or rich. He used to have one garment for the day and another for the night. He would accept the invitation of any disheveled and dusty person and would not despise whatever was set before him, no matter how little. He would not keep the evening food for the morning, nor the morning food for the evening. He was good-natured, he was generous, he was good company, he was

¹³⁵¹ "eternal kingship": that is, the Hereafter.

¹³⁵² Compare: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matthew 7:15)

¹³⁵³ "life": *sirat* (Arabic *sirah*). The Arabic root *s-y-r* is about movement, travel, going, etc. *Sirah* has the general meaning of "conduct, character, comportment, demeanor, behavior, way of life attitude, etc." (Wehr). In a more specialized usage, it means "biography, history." The term *Al-Sirah* (The Biography) is used to refer to the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (S).

smiling without laughter, he was sorrowful without frowning, he was humble without being abject, he was awe-inspiring without being harsh, he was generous without extravagance, he was merciful with all, he was sensitive, his head was always lowered, and he envied no one." So, whoever desires happiness should take him as an example and it was for this that God Most High praised him, saying: *And lo! Thou art of a tremendous nature.* (Q. 68:4)

AS FOR THE TREATMENT IN DETAIL, it is that one look to see that which one is proud about:

If it be due to ancestry, one must learn one's ancestry, for God Most High has explained this: *And He began the creation of man from clay; then He made his seed from an extract of despised fluid.* (Q. 32:7-8) He said: Thine origin is dust and thy setting out is from a drop of sperm; therefore, a drop of sperm is thy father and dust thy grandfather. Which is the meaner of the two? If thou sayest: "But my father is still alive!" between thee and thy father, there is a drop of sperm, a clot of blot, a morsel of flesh,¹³⁵⁴ and many infamies. Why dost thou not look at those? It is astonishing that if thy father had sifted dirt or cupped,¹³⁵⁵ thou wouldst be ashamed that he had touched dirt and blood, while thou thyself are from dust and blood. Why dost thou strut about arrogantly? When thou hast learned this, thou wilt be like the person who thinks he is a descendant of 'Ali while two sound witnesses testify that he is slave and the son of such-and-such a cupper. The import of this is made clear to him, that it is so. When he has comprehended this, he will no longer behave arrogantly, nor will he be able to do so. Moreover, whoever boasts of his ancestry boasts of others. Excellence must be in thee, not in another, for if a worm arise from the urine of a human being, it is not superior to the worm arising from the urine of a horse.

If the pride is due to beauty, whenever someone vaunts one's personal beauty, he ought to examine his insides to see what ignominies (are to be found there). He looks to see what nastiness is in his stomach and bladder, in his veins, his nose, his ears, and in all of his organs. What does he wash off himself every day with his own hand, that which he

¹³⁵⁴ "a morsel of flesh" (*mudghah*): an embryo or fetus.

¹³⁵⁵ Cupping (*hajjāmi kardan*) and cuppers (*hajjām*): the practice and practitioners of letting blood out of cut veins to relieve fevers, illnesses, etc. Heated cups or glass vessels were used to draw out the supposedly tainted blood from the sufferer. As bleeding voids purification (*tahārat*), bloodletters or cuppers were not held in high esteem (as was the case with butchers), though the practice was considered beneficial to society. Most often, barbers were the practitioners because of their familiarity with the use of razors in shaving. Socially, they were of a higher status than night-soil collectors, but lower than butchers.

cannot bear to see or smell and he is always carrying (inside him)?¹³⁵⁶ Then, he looks at his creation from menstrual blood and sperm, which passes through the way of urine, in order that he may come into existence.

Tawus (R) saw someone strutting about. He said that is not the behavior of a person who knows what is inside his belly. If a human being does not wash himself one day, he is filthier than a dunghill, for there is nothing in a dunghill filthier than that which appears from him. And then, the beauty of his form is not his to brag about, and the ugliness of others is not theirs with which to find fault. His beauty cannot be relied upon either, for it turns to ruin with a single illness, and small pox makes him uglier than all. All of this does not justify pride.

As for that pride which is in physical strength, one should reflect that if one of his veins becomes painful, there is no one more helpless than he. Should a fly seize something from him, he is more impotent than (the fly). If a gnat gets into his nose, or an ant gets into his ear, he is **more helpless** (than they) and it is feared that he may perish! If a thorn pierces his foot, he remains where he is. Then, should he possess great strength, a bull, ass, lion, or an elephant is stronger than he. What is there to brag about for something in which bulls, and asses have precedence over thee?

However, if one flaunts one's pride for wealth, servants, and slaves, and for rule and command, all of these are things external to one. If a thief should steal his wealth, or he be deprived of his office, what remains in his hands? And then, there are many Jews and foreigners whose wealth is greater than his, and there are many stupid and ignoble persons whose governing authority is greater than his. In sum, whatever is not in thee is not thine. All of (the other) is on loan, and nothing of all of that is thine.

From all of these causes, those in which he can take pride are evidently knowledge and worship, and their treatment is more difficult, for they are perfection. Knowledge is dear and great to God Most High, and knowledge is one of the attributes of God Most High. Therefore, it is hard for a learned person not to be attentive to himself, but this may be facilitated in two ways:

¹³⁵⁶ A reference to practice of washing oneself after a bowel movement, a much cleaner practice than smearing oneself with toilet paper (or corn cobs, leaves and the like, which was the method in the West before toilet paper was invented), provided the hands (particularly the left hand which is used for this purpose) are scrupulously washed afterwards.

THE FIRST WAY is that one know that the writ (of God) over the scholar is more tremendous and his danger is greater, for the deeds for which the ignorant may be excused will not be excused for the learned, and the crime of the learned is more blatant. One must meditate upon the Traditions that have come down about the dangers of the learned person's affair. Indeed, in the Quran, God Most High has likened the culpable scholar who has committed an offense in knowledge to an ass bearing a load of books on its back: *(The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is) as the likeness of the ass carrying books.* (Q. 62:5) And He likened them to a dog: *Therefore, his likeness is as the likeness of a dog. If thou attackest him, he pants with his tongue out, and if thou leavest him, he pants with his tongue out.* (Q. 7:176) That is, whether he knows or does not know, his own nature does not leave. What is meaner than an ass or a dog?

In truth, if at the end one does not find salvation, all the inanimate bodies are better than he, not to mention animals! It was for this that one of the Companions (R) would say: "I wish that I were a bird!" Another would say: "I wish that I were a sheep, slaughtered and devoured!" Another would say: "I wish that I were a piece of straw!" So, if one is aware of the danger of the ending, there is no care for pride, so that when he sees someone more ignorant than himself, he says: "He has not learned. He is excusable for his sinning and he is better than I." Or, when he sees someone more learned than himself and says: "He knows what I do not know. He is better than I." Or, if he sees a youth or a child, he says: "His sins are fewer than mine. He is better than I." Indeed, if he sees an unbeliever, he is not arrogant and he says: "Perhaps he will become a Muslim and find a good end."

How many there were who saw 'Umar before (the advent of) Islam and who were arrogant to him! That arrogance was an error in the knowledge of God Most High! Since greatness is in the salvation of the Hereafter, and that is inscrutable, each person must be occupied with the fear of that lest he become prideful

THE SECOND WAY is that one understand that pride is appropriate for God alone. God holds whoever vies with Him to be an enemy. He has said to everyone: "Thou wilt have a value to Me when thou recognizeest thine own worth." Thus, even though one knows that his own ending will be happiness, for example, he will not glory in that knowledge, because pride has departed from him. The prophets were humble, because they knew that God Most High is the Enemy of pride.

However, a devotee must not feel superior to a learned person, even if (that person) is not a devotee. (The devotee) should say: "Perhaps his knowledge will intercede for him and erase his wicked deeds."

And the Messenger (S) says: "The superiority of the scholar over the devotee is like my superiority over one of my helpers or

Companions." If one sees an ignorant person and his state is veiled, one says: "Perhaps he is more worshipful than I, but he has not made himself known." If he is a mischief-maker, one must say: "Many sins of wicked thoughts and evil desires that pass through my soul are worse than that open fornication. There are sins within me that I ignore by which all of my overt acts may be rendered without reward, and within him (there may be) a nature which will atone for of his sins. Moreover, perhaps he will repent and attain a good ending, while I may commit a mistake that will imperil my faith at the moment of death."

To summarize, since it is permissible that one's name be among the wicked in the view of God Most High, arrogance is a kind of ignorance. For this reason, the saints, scholars, shaykhs have always been humble.

DISCLOSING CONCEIT AND ITS HARMS

Know that conceit is one of the reprehensible moral traits. The Messenger (S) called three things destructive: miserliness, passion, and conceit. He (S) said: "If ye do not commit sins, I fear that something come upon which is worse than sinning, and that is self-admiration." 'Ayishah (R) was asked: "When is a man an evildoer?" She answered: "When he thinks that he is a doer of good, and that thought is conceit."

Ibn Mas'ud (R) says: "Perdition lies in two things: conceit and hopelessness." For that reason it has been said that he who is without hope is feeble in his quest, and the conceited is the same, for he supposes that he has no need of the quest. Mutarrif (R) says: "Every night I sleep and in the morning I am infirm and fearful. I prefer to spend the night in formal prayer and be pleased with myself."

One day, Bishr bin Mansur prolonged his formal prayer and someone was watching him at worship in astonishment. When (Bishr) had uttered the greeting of "peace" (which completes the formal prayer), he said: "Young man, be not astonished, for Iblis worshipped for a long time and thou knowest what his ending was."¹³⁵⁷

And know that many calamities are born of conceit. One is the pride of considering oneself better than others. Another is that one does not recall his own sins, and he does not attend to those that he does recall. He thinks that he has been forgiven. There is no expression of gratitude in acts of worship; he thinks that he does not need that. He does not know the blemish upon worship, nor does he seek it out. And he thinks himself unblemished. Dread departs from his soul and (he thinks) himself safe from the stratagems of God Most High. He recognizes his

¹³⁵⁷ Iblis, the fallen angel, refused to prostrate himself before Adam and was thrown out of heaven to mislead mankind.

place close to God Most High as a right because of the worship—which is itself a blessing from God Most High upon him—and he lauds himself. Since he is conceited about his own knowledge, he asks no one; and should a person say something contrary to his opinion or desire, he does not listen and remains flawed. He will heed no one's counsel.

THE TRUE NATURE OF CONCEIT AND INSOLENT

Know that whoever God Most High has granted comfort and blessings, such as knowledge, the grace of worship, etc., is anxious about the decline of those blessings and fears that they will be taken from him. This is not being conceited. Moreover, if one is not fearful and rejoices over them because they are a blessing and gift from God Most High, and not because of his (own) quality, he is still not conceited. If his joy is because of his own character and he neglects that it is a blessing from God Most High, and if he is devoid of terror for that, that joy in this respect is conceit. If, with that, he also thinks that he has some right over God Most High and he considers his worship an acceptable service, it is called insolence,¹³⁵⁸ because one thinks oneself a familiar entitled to take liberties.¹³⁵⁹ When he gives someone something, and there is some respect shown (to him) for that, he is pleased with himself in his heart. If, with all of this, he expects a service or a return, it is boldness.

And the Messenger (S) said: "The formal prayer of a person in which there is boldness does not pass beyond his head." And he (S) said: "If thou always smilest while firm in thine own shortcomings, it would be better if thou didst weep and considered that a deed."

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT FOR CONCEIT

Know that conceit is an illness and its cause is pure ignorance. Therefore, its remedy is pure spiritual knowledge. So, we say to the person whose nights and days are spent in worship and knowledge: "Thy conceit is from that which happens to thee, for which thou art the channel; or from that which comes into existence from thee and comes to

¹³⁵⁸ "insolence" (*idlāl*): the word *idlāl*, rare in modern Persian, is an Arabic verbal noun of Form IV (usually transitive or causative) from the root *d-l-l*. In modern Arabic, it suggests "being coy, taking liberties, being proud and conceited." Among the relevant definitions given by Steingass, we find: "being arrogant, provoking, coquettish." Persian dictionaries also stress the flaunting, coquetry, etc., in addition to the meaning of insolence and boldness. ('Amid)

¹³⁵⁹ "a familiar entitled to take liberties" (*dāllati*): from the Arabic *dāllah* meaning "familiarity, chumminess, liberty that one takes with someone; audacity, boldness (Wehr). The Persian ending *ī* of *nishah* makes an adjective or, as in this case, an abstract noun. Ghazzali is saying that the person considers himself entitled to a certain familiarity (with God) because of his worship. See preceding note also.

pass through thy strength. If (thy conceit) is from that which occurs to thee and for which thou art the channel, conceit does not befit a channel, for it is being used and the matter has nothing to do with it. Whose intermediary is it? If thou sayest: "What I do is with my strength and power," dost thou not know whence came this power, strength, will, and the organs by means of which thou functionest? If thou sayest: "It was my desire to perform this act," we say: "Who created this desire and this motivation? Who made it overcome thee so that it threw a chain of force around thy neck and set thee to work?"

An agent is sent to anyone who has been overcome by a motive so that he not be able to oppose it. The motivation is not his, but has been imposed upon him. Therefore, all is God's blessing and thy conceit is ignorance, for nothing is thine. Thine astonishment ought to be at the grace of God Most High who made many people heedless and their motives have been used up in bad deeds, but He sent to thee a delivery, through His Own care, and made the motive overwhelm thee and brought thee by the chain of force to His Own Presence."

If a monarch looks at his servants and bestows a robe of honor upon one among them all, without any reason or service that he had previously done, (the servant) must necessarily be astonished by the favor of the king who has singled him out without his deserving it, not at himself. Therefore, if he says: "The king is wise; if he had not seen a deserving quality in me, he would not have sent that special robe of honor to me," we say: "Whence didst thou bring that deserving quality? If it too is a gift of the king, there is no place for thy conceit. It is as though the king gives thee a horse and thou now become conceited. Then, he gives thee a slave and thou becomest conceited. Thou sayest: "He gave me the slave because I have a horse and the others did not." Since he had also given thee the horse, what room is there for conceit? Indeed, it is as though he gives them both to thee at one time." Likewise, if thou sayest: "He gave me the blessing of worship with that because I love Him," it is asked: "Who cast that love into thy heart?" If thou sayest: "I loved Him because I knew Him and ascertained His beauty," it is answered: "Who gave thee that knowledge and that view?" Consequently, since everything is from Him, conceit and pride in generosity and grace are His Who created thee. But thou art in between: thou thyself are no one. Nothing is thine, except (being) a channel for the power of God Most High, and that is all.

EXCURSUS: [QUESTION AND ANSWER]

If someone asks: Since I do not act and He does everything, from what can I hope for spiritual reward? There is no doubt that we have a spiritual reward for those of our actions that are by our free will.

The correct answer is that thou art a channel of power, and that is all. Thou art no one. *It was not thyself that threw (O Muhammad); but God threw* (Q. 7:17).¹³⁶⁰ That which thou hast done, thou didst not do. Rather, He did it. But, since He created motion after knowledge, power, and volition, thou imaginedst that thou did it. The mystery of this is very subtle and thou wilt not comprehend it. Perhaps there will be a reference to this in this book in the chapter on the Unity (of God) and Resignation (to the Will of God).¹³⁶¹

However, now suppose the limit of thine understanding is indulged and suppose that thy deeds *are* through thy power, yet thine action without power, volition, and knowledge is not possible. Therefore, the key to thine action lies in these three. Each one of them is a gift of God Most High. Thus, if there is a strongly-built treasury with its door firmly shut and in it, there are many blessings and comforts, but thou art helpless because thou dost not possess the key, the treasurer gives thee the key. Thou openest the door and extend thy hands and take up those blessings and comforts. Dost thou credit those blessings and comforts to the person who gave thee the key, or to the fact that thou puttest forth thy hands? Thou knowest that when he gave thee the key, extending the hands was not of much value. The value belongs to him who gave thee the key and the blessings and comforts were due to him. Therefore, be astonished at His favor! For, He has given thee the key to the Treasury of Devotion and has prohibited it to all libertines. He has given the others the key of sinning and shut fast the door of the Treasury of Devotion against them, without being treacherous with them. It is by His Own justice and without any service on thy part; rather, (it is) by His Own grace.

Therefore, whoever has come to know the true Unity will never harbor conceit. It is surprising that a poor man of reason would be amazed that He gives wealth to an ignoramus. "I am intelligent," he says, "(yet) He has deprived me (of wealth)!" He does not recognize that intelligence is the best of all blessings and this, too, *He* has given to him. If He had given both (wealth and intelligence) to him and deprived the other of both, it would not have been more just and perhaps that thoughtless person would complain. If it is said: "Exchange thine intelligence for his wealth," he will not do that. A poor, beautiful woman sees an ugly woman with many ornaments and adornments. She will say:

¹³⁶⁰ The Quranic passage from which this sentence is extracted concerns the battle of Uhud, AH3/625CE. The Prophet himself was wounded in it and its outcome ambiguous. The Prophet's courageous uncle, Hamzah, was killed along with about seventy other Muslims. The invading Makkans lost twenty men, but for some reasons did not pursue their advantage. Ghazzali uses the quotation for another purpose: as a refutation of the doctrine of free will.

¹³⁶¹ See Chapter Eight of the Fourth Pillar.

"What kind of wisdom is this that He gives these blessings, which do not beautify her, to the ugly?" She does not know even this much: that that which He has given her is better. If He had given both to her, it would not have been more just. It is like a king giving a horse to one person and a slave to another. (The recipient of the horse) is astonished. He says: "I have the horse; why did he give the slave to another?" This is out of ignorance.

It was for this that David (A) once said: "O Lord God, no night comes during which there is not one member of the family of David performing formal prayer until daybreak, and no day comes during which there is not one (of them) who is fasting." A revelation came to him: "Whence came this favor for them if it was not My favor? Now I shall leave thee to thyself for a moment." When he was left to himself, he committed that error which he regretted and for which he was contrite the (rest) of his life.¹³⁶²

Job (A) said: "O Lord God, Thou hast poured all of these calamities upon me and I have never chosen my desire over Thy purpose." Suddenly, a cloud appeared and he heard a cry from the cloud in ten thousand voices: "Whence came thy patience?" Job understood and poured a bit dust on his head and said: "O Lord God, it is from Thy grace." Then God Most High said: *Had it not been for the grace of God and His mercy unto you, not one of you would ever have grown pure. But God causes whom He will to grow pure, and God is All-hearing, All-knowing.* (Q. 24:21) "If it were not for My grace, there would be no way for anyone to his own purity, not to speak of others." And the Messenger (S) said about this: "No one achieves salvation through his own works." They asked: "Not even thou?" He replied: "Not even I; except by the mercy of God Most High." For this, the great of the Companions (R) used to say: "Would that we were dust, or that we did not exist." So, whoever understands this will not be conceited.

EXCURSUS: [CONCEIT FOR POWER, BEAUTY,
AND ANCESTRY IS PURE STUPIDITY]

Know that ignorance is appropriate for some who are conceited because of things which are not theirs and which have no connection to their power, such as strength, beauty, and ancestry. This is a more perfect ignorance. If a scholar or a devotee says: "I have acquired knowledge or I have performed worship," there is some room for his supposition. However, that itself is pure stupidity.

There is the person who brags about his pedigree of kings and tyrants. If he were to see them and what their condition is in hell and how

¹³⁶² A reference to the story of David and Bathsheba.

they will be scorned by their enemies at the Resurrection, they would be ashamed of them. Indeed, there is no lineage more honorable than that of (Muhammad) Mustafa (S), but bragging about that is vain. The conceit of some has reached the point that they imagine that committing sins will not harm them and they do anything they please. They do not know even this much that since they act contrary to their fathers and grandfathers, they have cut off their own lineage. (The forefathers) would have known that honor lies in humility and piety, not in ancestry. There are also persons in their ancestry who are dogs in hell.

The Messenger (S) prohibited boasting of lineage and said: "All are the children of Adam, and Adam is (a child) of the dust." When Bilal made the call to obligatory prayer, the elders of the Quraysh demanded: "What right has that black slave to that position which has been given to him?" This verse was revealed: *Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most god-fearing of you.* (Q. 49:13) And when this verse was revealed: *And warn thy tribe of near kindred...* (Q. 26:214), (the Messenger) said to Fatimah (R): "O daughter of Muhammad, make thine own arrangements, for tomorrow my fatherhood of thee will have no benefit." And he said to Safiyah¹³⁶³ (R), his own paternal aunt: "O aunt of Muhammad, busy thyself with thine own affairs, for I shall not be able to help thee." If his relationship were sufficient for his relatives, Fatimah (R) would have been delivered from the trouble of devoutness so as to live well, and both worlds would have been hers. In a word, there is greater hope of his intercession for his kin.

However, it may be that the sins are such that intercession will not do. Not all sins are susceptible to intercession, as God Most High said: *And they cannot intercede for him except whom He accepts.* (Q. 21:28) Strutting about in the hope of intercession is like the sick person who does not abstain and eats as he pleased in the hope: "My father is a great physician." It is said that there are illnesses that become incurable and the skill of a physician has no profit. One's temperament must be such that the physician will be able to help it. Not everyone who goes to kings has an office and can intercede for all crimes. Indeed, a king will not accept intercession for a person to whom he is hostile. There is no sin that cannot be the cause of a grudge, for as God Most High has concealed His divine displeasure concerning sins, it may be that that which thou thinkest would be less important be the cause of (His) hostility, as God Most High said: *Ye counted it a trifle, but in the sight of God it was great.* (Q. 24:15) Ye thought it a trifle, but it was great to God Most High. There is the hope of intercession for all Muslims, but fear is

¹³⁶³ Safiyah: the Prophet's aunt. She was the sister of his uncle Hamzah who was slain at the battle of Uhud. She took part in that battle and killed a Jewish spy during the war of the Trench at Madinah.

not banished with the hope of intercession and conceit does not assemble with fear. [*And God is More Knowing and Wiser.*]

CHAPTER TEN: CONCERNING HEEDLESSNESS, ERROR, AND DELUSION

Know that whoever remains deprived of the (spiritual) happiness of the Hereafter, it is because he did not travel the way. Whoever has not traveled the way, it is because either he did not know or he was not able. Whoever was not able, it is because he was the prisoner of carnal appetites or has not confronted his appetites. Whoever did not know, it is because he was heedless and uninformed, or he had lost the way, or—while still on the way—he fell off it due to some kind of vainglory.

As for that misery which arises from inability,¹³⁶⁴ we have discussed that. These folk are like the person who must travel a road on which there are many obstacles and hardships, but he is weak and cannot overcome the obstacles. The obstacles on the way (of faith) are (things) such as the appetite for rank, the appetite for wealth, and the appetites of the belly and the genitalia. We have discussed these appetites (above). There is the person who overcomes one obstacle, but is helpless at the second. There is the person who overcomes two, but is helpless before the third, and so forth. So long as not all of the obstacles have been put behind one, one does not reach the destination.

As for the misery that is because of ignorance, there are three kinds:

ONE (in Arabic) is heedlessness and (in Persian) unawareness, which are called (in Persian) “ignorance.”¹³⁶⁵ He is like the person who sleeps on the road while the caravan passes him by. If someone does not awaken him, he will perish.

THE SECOND KIND (in Arabic) is error, which is called (in Persian) “being astray.”¹³⁶⁶ Its similitude is that of the person whose destination lies to the east, but he turns to the west and proceeds. The farther he goes, the more distant he becomes (from his destination). This is called “extreme error.” However, that which is going from left to right is also error, but not extreme.

As for THE THIRD KIND, it is (in Arabic) delusion, which is called (in Persian) “deception” and “vainglory.”¹³⁶⁷ Its similitude is that of the

¹³⁶⁴ “inability” (*nā tawānistān*): So the HK text. AA has “ignorance” (*nā dānistān*), but that is dealt with in the next paragraph, while the subject of this paragraph is based on the metaphor of physical effort. HK seems preferable here.

¹³⁶⁵ “heedlessness”: Ar. *ghaflat*; “unawareness”: Per. *bi-khabarī*; “ignorance”: Per. *nā-dānī*.

¹³⁶⁶ “error”: Ar. *ḍalālat*; “being astray”: Per. *gumrāhī*.

¹³⁶⁷ “vainglory” (*pindār*): The Persian word can mean “thought, imagination, fancy, opinion; pride, conceit, a high opinion of oneself.” (Steingass) We use “vainglory” here for the reader’s convenience to distinguish it from other forms of conceit being discussed

person who wishes to perform the Greater Pilgrimage. He will need pure gold in the desert. He sells whatever he has and exchanges it for gold, but the gold he receives is counterfeit or adulterated, however, he does not know that. He supposes that he has made his preparations and will achieve his objective. When he reaches the desert and offers his gold, no one will look at him. Regret and confusion remain in his hands. With regard to these people, God Most High has said: *Say: Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers by their works? Those whose effort goes astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they do good work.* (Q. 18:103-104) He said: "The greatest losers in the Hereafter are those who have taken trouble and who think that they have accomplished something. When they look, they have all been in error."¹³⁶⁸ The fault of this person is in that he should first have studied the business of money changing, then taken the money, so that he would be able to distinguish between the pure and the false. If he did not know money changing, he should have shown that gold to a moneychanger and then accepted it. If he did not do that either, he could have gotten hold of a touchstone.¹³⁶⁹ The moneychanger is like a spiritual guide and master who must be at the level of the spiritual guides, or with an experienced guide; he must show his affair to him. When he is unable to do either of these, his appetite is his touchstone: he knows that whatever his fancy, nature, and carnal appetite are drawn to is false.

Mistakes occur in this too, but usually the fact is that (this criterion) is correct. Therefore, ignorance is the first source of misery, and this is of three kinds. The particulars of each of these three and the treatment of each are a religious obligation of knowing. The first principle is learning of the way; after that, the traveling of the way. When both are learned, nothing remains. It is for this that (Abu Bakr) the Truly Righteous, (R) made a supplication concerning this shortcoming and said: *"Show us the truth as truth and enable us to follow it and show us the false as false and enable us to avoid it."*¹³⁷⁰

So, we have called the previous principles "the Treatment of Inability"; now we shall discuss the Treatment of Ignorance."

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT OF HEEDLESSNESS AND IGNORANCE

Know that most people are veiled because of heedlessness. Indeed, ninety-nine in a hundred are thus. The meaning of heedlessness

in this passage. Other terms given in the sentence are: delusion (Ar. *ghurūr*) and deception (Per. *fariftagī*).

¹³⁶⁸ Ghazzali's paraphrase of the preceding Quranic verse.

¹³⁶⁹ "touchstone" (*sang-i zar*): a stone, related to flint, formerly used to test the purity of gold and silver by rubbing the gold (or silver) on it. Good gold would leave a streak on it.

¹³⁷⁰ Ghazzali follows this Arabic sentence with a Persian translation omitted here.

is that they are not aware of the peril of the affair of the Hereafter. If they had knowledge of it, they would not sin. For, a human being has been so created that when he sees danger, he avoids it, even if it necessitates considerable trouble and effort. However, this danger can be seen by the light of prophethood or by the proclamations of prophethood that reach others, or by the proclamations of the religious scholars who are the heirs of the prophets. Why, there is no treatment for anyone who remains exhausted upon the way and falls asleep, save that an alert, compassionate person come to him and awaken him. This compassionate, wakeful person is the Messenger, and his representatives are the scholars of religion. All the prophets have been sent for this, as God Most High says: *That thou mayst warn a folk whose fathers were not warned, so they are heedless.* (Q. 36:6) And He said: *That thou mayst warn a folk to whom no warner came before thee, that haply they may walk aright.* (Q. 32:3) (God) says: "I sent thee who art Muhammad to awaken a people from the sleep of heedlessness and say to all: *Lo! man is in a state of loss!* (Q. 103:2) He created all at the edge of hell: *Then, as for him who rebelled and chose the life of the world, lo! hell will be his home. But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, lo! the Garden shall be his home.* (Q. 79:37-41)

Whoever has been brought into the world and takes to pursuing his lusts, and who turns to the world, shall fall into hell. His lust is like a straw mat that covers the top of the well of hell: whoever steps upon it will certainly fall into the well, but whoever has opposed his passion shall fall into heaven. The similitude of passion is that of an obstruction on the path to heaven: whoever overcomes it will certainly reach heaven. The Messenger (S) said about this: *"Heaven is surrounded by adversities and the fire (of hell) is surrounded by carnal passions."*

Therefore, whichever of mankind is in the desert, such as the (desert) Arabs, Kurds, Turks, and their likes, among whom there are no religious scholars, will remain in the sleep of heedlessness because no one has awakened them and they themselves are unaware of the danger of the Hereafter. For that reason they do not travel the way. Those in the villages are like them, for scholars are rare among them, because the villages are like the grave, as in the Tradition: *The inhabitants of villages are the inhabitants of graves.*¹³⁷¹ But those who live in a city in which the religious scholars and preachers do not ascend the pulpit to lecture, or the scholar of that town is busy with the world and not with the affairs of religion, also remain in heedlessness. For, the religious scholar is also heedless and asleep. How can he awaken others?

¹³⁷¹ In Arabic, "villages" (*kufūr*, sing. *kafr*) half-rhymes with "graves" (*qubūr*). It is interesting to note that the root for *kufūr* (*k-f-r*) is the same for the same for "unbelief" (*kufr*) and "unbeliever" (*kāfir*). In modern Arabic, the more common word for "village" is *qaryah*.

And if the learned scholar of the city ascends the pulpit and holds assemblies, as is the custom of the barren remembrancers,¹³⁷² he offers rhymed prose, incoherences, subtle conceits, promises of mercy, and blandishments that cause people to think that no matter what their nature is itself, they shall obtain (divine) mercy! The condition of these people is worse than that of the heedless! Their similitude is that of a sleeper on the roadside. Someone wakes him up and gives him some wine. He becomes drunk and falls down. Before that, this wretch was such that he could have been awakened easily at any sound he heard. Now he has become so that if he is kicked in the head fifty times, he himself will not obtain any awareness of it. He will say to whatever thou sayest to him: "O man! God Most High is generous and merciful. What harm do my sins do to Him? His heaven is more spacious than that there be no place for us in it," and other foolish prattle. This will take root in his mind. Whatever remembrancer is of this description, he is an affliction to religion and the people. He is like the physician who gives honey to a feverish sick person who is on the point of death and says: "There is a cure in honey." Honey cures a person whose illness is cold! Quranic verse and Traditions of hope and expectation of the mercy of God Most High are remedies, but only for two types of sick persons:

ONE (TYPE) is (the person) who commits so many sins that he has lost hope and, by reason of that loss of hope, does not repent. He says: "My repentance shall never be accepted." This verse is the cure for that: *Say: O My servants who have been prodigal to their own hurt! Despair not of the mercy of God, Who forgives all sins. Lo! He is Forgiving, the Merciful.* (Q. 39:53) The condition is that thou must recite this verse which follows it: *Turn to Him repentant, and surrender unto Him, before there come unto you the doom, when ye cannot be helped.* (Q. 39:54) He says to him: Do not lose hope, for God Most High forgives all sins when thou turnest back and repent; and thou followest that with: *the better of that which is revealed.* (Q. 39:55)¹³⁷³

THE OTHER SICK PERSON is he whose fear has overcome him, so that he does not rest from acts of worship. It is to be feared that he will destroy himself through the excess of his efforts by not sleeping at night, eating inadequate food, and the like. The ointment for the injury of this fear is the Quranic verses of mercy. However, if thou sayest this to the heedless and the imprudent, it is like salt that thou sprinklest on a burnt

¹³⁷² "remembrancers" (*mudhakkirān*): those who lead group remembrance of God.

¹³⁷³ "the better of that which is revealed": a short-hand reference to the next verse, the complete text of which is: *And follow the better (guidance) of that which is revealed unto you from your Lord, before the doom comes upon you suddenly when ye know not.* (Q. 39:55)

person, and it increases the illness. Just as the physician who treats a hot sickness with honey is afflicting the patient, this scholar, too, afflicts the people's religion and is the companion of the Impostor¹³⁷⁴ and the friend of Iblis. Iblis does not enter any city where such a person is, for (that scholar) himself is (Iblis's) total proxy.

However, if the words of a preacher are in accordance with the Religious Law, fear-inspiring, and measured, but his behavior and activities are in contradiction to his speech and he is eager for the world; heedlessness does not come from his words either. He is like the person who takes a tray of sweetmeats¹³⁷⁵ before (others), eats them with total greed, and (then) cries out: "O people! Beware! Has anyone around here discovered that these sweetmeats are full of poison?" This causes the people to become more eager to eat them. They say: "He says that so that they will all be his and no one squeeze against him while he eats them." However, if both his actions and his words are in conformity to and of the type of the behavior and words of the forefathers, the heedless will be awakened from their sleep of heedlessness by his words—if he is accepted by the people. But, if they do not accept him, or some do not listen to his words, or people do not come (to hear them) and they remain in heedlessness, it is (one's) duty to go after them and go to their homes, as much as one is able, and invite them (to faith).

So, from all of this it is plain that ninety-nine out of a hundred people are in the sleep of heedlessness and unaware of the danger of the affair of the Hereafter. Heedlessness is an illness which the afflicted person cannot cure himself. The heedless person is unaware of his own heedlessness. How can he seek treatment? Therefore, the treatment is in the hands of the religious scholars. Children who wake up from the sleep of heedlessness are awakened by the words of (their) mothers, fathers, and teachers. Others are awakened by the words of a preacher. Since religious scholars and preachers have become scarce, the sickness of heedlessness has consequently become chronic. The people have remained sick with heedlessness. If the Hereafter is discoursed upon, it is done glibly and in the manner of an (old) custom. Inside, they are unaware of the pain of this suffering and the fear of this danger. In this, there is no benefit.

¹³⁷⁴ "the Impostor" (*dajjāl*): the name given to the religious charlatans and impostors (it is said that they will number about thirty) who will appear in the world. The last will be the one who is called the Antichrist in Christian tradition. (Hughes)

¹³⁷⁵ "sweetmeat" (*lawzīnah*): a confection made with almonds.

DISCLOSING ERROR AND LOSING ONE'S WAY, AND THEIR TREATMENT

Know that there is another group who neglect the Hereafter, but they hold a belief which is contrary to the truth and they have fallen from the way of God. This loss of the way is their veil (between them and God). We shall offer five examples in order to make this plain:

THE FIRST EXAMPLE is that some deny the Hereafter and have come to the belief that when a human being dies, he becomes non-existent, as grass becomes dry, or as a lamp is extinguished. For this reason, they have thrown off the reins of shame and live as they please. They suppose that that which the prophets have said, they said for good of the people in this world, or in the quest for rank, profit, and adherents. Perhaps they declare openly that the talk about hell is like that which one says to a child: "If thou dost not go to school, thou wilt be put in a mouse hole." This wretch, if he were to glance at the likes of these would know that it is misfortune, for by reason of not going to school, the child will fall into that which is worse than a mouse hole. As the perspicacious have known, the misfortune of being veiled from God, may He be honored and glorified, is worse than hell and its cause is the pursuit of one's inclinations. Nonetheless, the denial (of the Hereafter) is agreeable to (human) nature and this has become dominant over the minds of many people concerning the end of the time, even though they do not express it in words. Perhaps, they also conceal it in themselves, but their acts and deeds demonstrate that their minds are thus, for in fear of a future hardship in this world they will endure hardships in the present. If they had a belief in the consequences (of the Hereafter), they would not treat it so lightly. The remedy for this is that the reality of the Hereafter be explained to them, and that is (accomplished) in three ways:

THE FIRST (WAY) is by witnessing heaven and hell and the conditions of the devotee and the rebels (against God). However, this is reserved for messengers and saints, for even if they are in this world, in that state which comes upon them—which is called annihilation and unawareness—they see the conditions of that world with their own eyes. The veil (which prevents) viewing that is the work of the senses and occupation with the carnal appetites. This has been referred to in the Prolegomena of this book. However, that is very rare. How would the person who does not believe in the Hereafter believe in that and where would he look for it? If he does seek it, when would he find it?

THE SECOND WAY is by becoming familiar with the evidence about what the reality of man is and what the soul is, so that it becomes evident that (the soul) is an essence established by itself and without need of a body. The body is its vehicle and tool, not its substance. With (the body's) annihilation, it does not cease to exist. There is a way for

this, but it is rare and difficult. The path of the religious scholars is rooted in knowledge. There has already been a reference to this in the Prolegomena of this book.

THE THIRD WAY is the method of the common folk. That is that the light of spiritual knowledge spread from the prophets and the saints and the upright in knowledge to the people who see them and converse with them. This is called faith. Whoever is not helped by the conversation with an experience spiritual guide or a humble scholar remains in misfortune. However greater the guide or scholar, the greater the faith spreading from his illumination. It is for this that the most fortunate of mankind were the Companions by virtue of the happiness of their observation of the states of Mustafa (S). Then (come) the Followers¹³⁷⁶ by virtue of their observation of the Companions. About this said the Messenger (S): "*The best of mankind are of my era, then those who came after them.*" These people are like the child who repeatedly sees his father flee from and abandon his home to a snake wherever he sees one. (The child) will necessarily come to believe that snakes are bad and that he should flee from them. It becomes his nature that wherever he sees a snake, he flees from it without knowing the reality of its harm. Perhaps, he will hear that there is a poison in it. He will know the name of poison, but not the reality of it.

The parable of the witnessing of the prophets (S) is that one sees a person who dies from being bitten by a snake. The snake bites another and he dies. The harm (of the snake) is made known by witnessing it. This is the ultimate belief. The parable of the proof of upstanding scholars is that it is unseen, but from a kind of analogy. The temperament of a human being and that of a snake are known, and the antipathy of one for the other is known. From this a certainty comes, but it is not the same as witnessing. The faith of all people, except for the great religious scholars, all derives from the spread of the association with the scholars and the great. This is the most proximate treatment.

THE SECOND EXAMPLE: The error when some people do not deny the Hereafter and do not definitely believe its non-existence, but they are perplexed by that and say that (the existence or non-existence of the Hereafter) cannot be truly known. Then, Satan places evidence before them so that they say that this world is certain, but there is doubt about the Hereafter. Certainty cannot be given to doubt. This is false, for the Hereafter is certain in the opinion of the people of certainty.

However, the treatment of this perplexity is that it be said: "The bitterness of the medicine is certain, the cure is doubtful. The danger of traveling by sea is certain, the profit of trade is doubtful." If someone

¹³⁷⁶ "Followers" (*tābiʿīn*): the generation following the Companions of the Prophet.

says to thee when thou art thirsty: "Do not drink this water because a snake has put its mouth in it, the pleasure of drinking the water is certain, but the poison is doubtful, why dost thou abstain?" But thou sayest if the certain is passed up, the harm is sure. If the talk about the poison is true, one will perish. One cannot endure that. In the same way, the pleasure of the world is for no more than a hundred years. When it is over, it has become as a dream.

The Hereafter is eternal and one cannot play with eternal sorrow. If it is a lie, only think about how many days that thou were not in this world.¹³⁷⁷ As thou wert not in eternity without beginning, so thou art not in eternity without end. But, if it is true, thou wilt have escaped eternal punishment. It was about this that 'Ali (R) said to an atheist: "If it is as thou sayest, we will all have been saved; if it is not, we will have been saved, but thou wilt have fallen into hell."

THE THIRD EXAMPLE: Some people believe in the Hereafter, but they say that it is credit while the world is cash, and cash is better than credit. They do not know this much, that cash is better than credit when they are equal; but if the credit is a thousand and the cash one, credit for a thousand is better, as all transactions of the people are based upon this. This too is one of the errors, but a person does not know even this much.

THE FOURTH EXAMPLE: One has faith in the Hereafter, but when affairs are to his liking in this world and he finds the comforts of the world ready, he says: "Just as I am in comfort in this world, in that world too I shall be in comfort, for God Most High has given me these blessings because He loves me. Tomorrow, too, He will do the same; like the two brothers whose story is recalled in Chapter of the Cave (Q. 18) when one said: '*If indeed I am brought back unto my Lord, I shall surely find better than this as a resort.*' (Q. 18:36) And that other who said: '*I shall be better off with Him.*'" (Q. 41:50)

The treatment for this is that one should know of the person who has a dear child and a vile slave. He keeps the child a captive to school and the teacher's baton, while he leaves the slave to live as he wishes and does not worry about (the slave's) misfortune. If the slave imagines that he (gives him this freedom) out of his love and that (his master) loves him more than he does his son, it is stupidity. The custom is this, that God Most High withholds (the bounty) of the world from His saints and pours it upon His enemies. The similitude of his tranquillity and ease is the ease of the person who is lazy and does not sow seed. He certainly shall not reap.

¹³⁷⁷ That is, the time before your birth.

THE FIFTH EXAMPLE: That is that one say: "God Most High is Merciful and Generous, and He will not withhold heaven from anyone." This fool does not know that generosity and mercy are more than giving thee the means to throw one seed in the ground and reap seven hundred and, by those means, achieve eternal kingship. If this be the meaning of generosity and mercy—that one reap without labor—then why dost thou cultivate, do business, and seek a livelihood? Be patient and be idle, for God Most High is Generous and All-Powerful! He will cause plants to grow without seed and cultivation. Since thou dost not have faith in such generosity, even though He says: *And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof depends upon God*, (Q. 11:6) yet thou believest this about the Hereafter, even though He says: *And man has only that for which he has strived*. (Q. 53:6) That is the height of being astray! As the Messenger (S) says: *"The fool is he who follows his self and its inclinations and has expectations of God."*

Just as one who hopes for a child without marrying or who marries but does not engage in sexual intercourse, or who has intercourse but withholds his seed, is a fool—even though God Most High is Generous and able to create a child without sperm, the person who engages in intercourse and sows his seed and waits in the hope that perhaps God Most High will prevent harm and a child will come into being is the intelligent one. In the same way, he who does not believe, or believes but does not work prudently, and has the hope of salvation is a fool. What both of these do is hope for the grace of God, that He will restrain the bolts of lightning at the time of death so that he may carry his faith soundly (to the Hereafter). The latter one is intelligent and the former one is deluded.

Those persons who say that God Most High has treated us well in this world and He will treat us well in the next too, because He is Generous and Merciful, have deluded themselves about God Most High. God Most High has commanded caution from both, having said: *Lo! God's promise is the very truth. Let not the life of this world beguile you, nor let the deceiver beguile you, in regard to God*. (Q. 33:13) He says: "O mankind! The promises I have given are the truth; whoever does good shall see good, and whoever does evil shall see evil. Be careful, lest ye be deceived by the world! Be not deceived with respect to God Most High!"

DISCLOSING VAINGLORY AND ITS TREATMENT

Know that the vainglorious are despised. These are persons who have a good opinion of themselves and their works and are heedless of the harm of that (attitude). They do not distinguish between the base and

the pure,¹³⁷⁸ because they have not learned money-changing well, and they are deceived by color and appearance. Or, (they are) those persons who busy themselves with learning and worship and who have passed beyond the veil of heedlessness and going astray. Ninety-nine of a hundred of them are deluded. For this reason, the Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, Adam (A) will be told: 'Separate out those of thy children whose portion is hell.' He will ask: 'How many of how many?' They will answer: 'Out of every thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine.'" These are not those who will be in hell forever, but those for whom there is no cure but to pass through hell. They are the heedless, those who are in error, the self-deluded, and the prisoners of their own appetites, even if they were aware that they are guilty. The conceited¹³⁷⁹ are numerous and their categories are countless, but they can be divided into four classes: the learned, the worshipful, the Sufis, and the rich.

[THE CATEGORIES OF THE VAINGLORIOUS]

THE FIRST CATEGORY of the vainglorious is the learned. Some of them spend their time in learning and acquiring the sciences, but they fall short in their deeds and do not restrain their hands, tongues, eyes, and genitalia from the commission of sins. They imagine that because they have achieved some degree in knowledge that people such as they will not experience punishment, nor be held accountable for their deeds; rather, many people will find salvation through their intercession. They are like the sick man who studies the science of his illness, repeats it every night, writes a fine prescription, and knows the qualities of the medicine for the illness, but who never takes it and cannot tolerate the bitterness of the medicine. What profit does the repeated recitation of the qualities of the medicine hold for him? God Most High says: *He is prosperous who has cleansed himself.* (Q. 87:14) And He says: *But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, lo! the Garden shall be his home.* (Q. 79:37-41) (God) says that salvation is for him who has purified himself, not that one should learn the science of purification. The person goes to Paradise is he who opposes his inclinations. (God) does not say that the person who knows that he ought to oppose them (will go to heaven). And this simpleton, if his vain supposition arises from the Traditions that have come down about the virtue of knowledge, why does he not study those Traditions which have come down with respect to bad scholars who have been likened in the Quran to asses carrying a load of books on their backs, or to dogs? (The Messenger) says that the evil scholar will be tossed into

¹³⁷⁸ A reference to good and false coin.

¹³⁷⁹ Ghazzali appears to be using "the vainglorious" (*ahl-i pindār*) and "the conceited" (*ahl-i ʿujb*) synonymously. See Note 1367.

hell so that his back and neck are broken and fire will roll about him. The inhabitants of hell will gather around him, (saying): "Who art thou and what is this punishment that afflicts thee?" He will say: "I am he who spoke but did not practice (what I spoke)"

The Messenger (S) said: "No one's punishment at the Resurrection will be greater than that of the learned scholar who did not act according to his own knowledge." Abu Darda(R) says: "Woe unto him who does not know, once; but upon him who knows but does not act upon it, seventy times. That is, his knowledge will be evidence against him."

SOME have committed no fault in learning or practice, but their external deeds have brought them to the point that they have neglected the purity of their souls. They have not exposed their internal bad characteristics, such as pride, envy, hypocrisy, office seeking, and ill feelings toward their peers and taking delight in their troubles and being sorrowful at their ease. They have become neglectful of those Traditions that say that (even) a little bit of hypocrisy is attributing partners to God; that the person who has one particle of pride in his heart shall not be admitted into heaven; that envy destroys faith as fire destroys wood; and that which says that God Most High does not look at your appearance—He looks into your souls.

Thus, these people are like the person who has sown something and cuts off the tops of the thorns and weeds which he should have uprooted from his field before they grew strong. He has left the roots in the ground; no matter how often he cuts them, they grow up again. The root of bad deeds is a bad character, and its source must be pulled out by the roots. Indeed, the similitude of that is that one have a filthy interior and an embellished exterior, like a privy, the outside of which has been plastered; or like a decorated grave the surface of which is painted while inside there is carrion; or like a dark house behind which a candle has been placed.

Jesus (A) likened a bad scholar in this manner, saying: "He is like a sieve from which flour falls while the chaff remains inside. Ye too speak of wisdom, but that which is bad stays inside you."

Others may have learned that this characteristic is bad and that one must avoid the bad and the soul must be kept pure of it, but they imagine that their own souls are devoid of it and that they are greater than that they should fall victim to such things. For, they better understand the knowledge of all this! When the sign of pride appears in them, their Satan says to them: "That is not pride. Rather, it is the quest for the honor of religion. If thou art not honored, Islam is not honored." If they don fine garments and keep horses, furniture, and ceremony, they say: "This is not vanity; it is the blinding of the enemies of the faith. For, the heretic innovators are blinded by the religious scholars' being well turned out."

They have forgotten the manner of living) of Mustafa (S), Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali, may God be pleased with them, and their threadbare clothes. They delude themselves into thinking that what those (personages) did was the lowering of Islam. Now Islam will become honored by their own adornment! If envy appears among them, they say: "This is the firmness of truth." If hypocrisy appears, they say: "This is what is best for the people, so that they recognize my devotion and imitate me." When they call upon rulers, they say: "This is not humbling (ourselves) before a tyrant, which is forbidden. Rather, it is for intercession for Muslims and for the good of their affairs." If they accept unlawful property, they say: "This is not forbidden, because this property has no owner. It must be used for the common welfare, and the common welfare of Islam is dependent upon me."

If one judges fairly and weighs (the matter), one knows that the welfare of religion is nothing more than that the people turn away from the world. Because of him, more people who have become desirous of the world than have turned away from it! Therefore, Islam is dependent upon his non-existence, and the welfare of Islam does not lie with him or the likes of him. This and the like of these vainglorious imaginings and conceits are false. We have discussed their treatment and true nature in the previous chapters; saying more would be prolixity. *Peace!*

ANOTHER GROUP have themselves made a mistake in the spirit of knowledge and the more important sciences, such as commentary, the Traditions, psychology, ethics, the way of austerity, and that which we have related in this book: the knowledge of the path to the Hereafter, and the aids and the banes of negotiating the way of religion and the way of guarding the soul. All of these are individual duties which they themselves may not have mastered and do not know that they are a part of the course of study. They may have spent all their time either in debate and dispute, in partisan theological discourse, or in issuing decrees about the people's worldly litigations. They spend all of their time in all of the studies which do not summon (the people) from this world to the Hereafter, or do not summon them from greed to satisfaction, or do not summon them from hypocrisy to sincerity, or do not summon them from heedlessness and smug security to fear and piety. They imagine that (what they have learned) is all there is to knowledge and that whoever turns to the others has turned away from science and forsaken it. A detailed explanation of these delusions is lengthy and we have discussed them in the book on Delusions in *The Revival*. It would not be possible to elaborate further in this book.

ANOTHER GROUP have busied themselves with the study of preaching, and their speech is all incomprehensible rhymed prose, verse, quaint sayings, and incoherences that they have strung together. Their object is to bring the people to clamoring and to singing their praises. They do not know even this that the reality of bringing people to the

remembrance of God is that the fire of suffering appear in their souls and that they see the danger of the affair of the Hereafter, so that they engage in the lamenting for this tribulation. Reminding and preaching are lamentations about this suffering. However, lamentations that are not mixed with grief and that use borrowed words have no effect upon the soul. The deluded among these folk are many, but the discussion of this would be lengthy.

ANOTHER GROUP have spent their time in the letter of religious jurisprudence and have not understood that the stricture of religious jurisprudence is nothing more than a law one observes by means of which the sultan governs the people. However, the knowledge of that which is related to the path of the Hereafter is something else. They imagine that everything which is correct according to the letter of religious jurisprudence will have profit in the Hereafter. The similitude of this is the person who sells his wealth subject to the poor rate to his wife and buys her property. The letter of the decision of the Law is that both properties are no longer subject to the poor rate; that is, it does not go to the ruler's tax collector when the latter comes for the payment. He will look at the appearance of ownership, and the ownership has been discontinued before the year is ended and he issues that decree. He does not know this much that the person who does such a thing for the purpose of avoiding payment of the poor rate will incur the wrath of God Most High, just as for the person who does not pay the poor rate. Miserliness is a destroyer and the poor rate is purification from the pollution of miserliness. It is the destroyer of miserliness that is to be obeyed, while this resorting to a deceit is obedience to miserliness. Thus, when miserliness has become obeyed in this, the destruction has been completed. How will one obtain salvation?

It is the same for the husband who takes to behaving badly with his wife in order to torment her into surrendering her dowry to him. According to the letter of a decree that is related to a judicial assembly, this quittance is correct, for the judge of this world knows the way of the tongue, not of the soul. However, in the next world he will be liable for that which is a quittance disliked (by God).¹³⁸⁰

And just as making a request of a person in public so as to shame him is permissible according to the letter of a decree; (but) in fact, it is confiscation. There is no difference between his beating him with the

¹³⁸⁰ In Islamic the dowry is given by the husband to the wife, not by the wife or her family to the husband as is the European custom. Part of the dowry is often in the form of an obligation to be paid by the husband to the wife in the event of divorce. Unscrupulous husbands have been known to torment their wives in order to force them to renounce the dowry so that they may escape a difficult situation. This has an aspect of legality according to the letter of the law, but completely violates its spirit. The dowry was designed to protect the woman from destitution in the event of divorce.

whip of shame so that he surrender his property from the pain of that and that he openly beat him with a club and confiscate it.

These and their likes are numerous, because a person who knows naught except the letter of religious jurisprudence is in this vainglorious self-delusion, but he does not comprehend the inner spirit of religion.

THE SECOND CATEGORY is the worshipful and the devout; the vainglorious among them are many:

SOME are deluded in that they are held back from religious obligations by virtues, as the person who is anxious about purification and for that reason misses the time for obligatory formal prayer, but speaks harshly to his mother, father, and friend, or the one who harbors extreme suspicions about the uncleanness of the water (for purification). But, when a morsel comes to him, he imagines that everything is lawful. He may not avoid that which is manifestly forbidden yet not set his bare foot on the ground. He eats of the manifestly forbidden and forgets the behavior of the Companions, as when 'Umar (S) said: "I have withheld my hand from the lawful seventy times for fear that I would fall into the unlawful." Despite that, he purified himself from the pitcher of a Christian woman. Therefore, these people have brought the caution of food to (the level of) the caution of purification.¹³⁸¹ It may be that he imagines that it is a tremendous sin¹³⁸² if a person puts on a garment washed by a launderer.

The Messenger (S) put on clothing that had been sent to him by unbelievers, and the Companions would wear any clothing they obtained as booty from the unbeliever. No one has ever related that they put them in water. Indeed, they girded their waists with the weapons of the unbelievers and performed formal prayer and they would not say that the iron should be passed through water, or that they should be lacquered, or that they would not perform formal prayers with decorated skins. So, whoever has not been cautious with regard to his belly, or tongue, or his other organs, but exaggerates in these things, is the laughing stock of Satan. Indeed, he who performs everything and is wasteful in the use of water, or his prayer passes the beginning of its period, is also deluded. We have discussed the rules of these cautions in the Book of Purification.¹³⁸³

¹³⁸¹ That is, they have mixed up the strictures. The example of 'Umar cited shows that the lawfulness of one's sustenance is more serious than the minutiae of water for purification. Following their own desires, these people are lax in what they eat but strict in the details of purification.

¹³⁸² "a great sin": because he cannot be absolutely certain about the garment's purity.

¹³⁸³ See Chapter Three of First Pillar.

ANOTHER GROUP are overcome by anxiety concerning the Declaration of Intention for the formal obligatory prayer so that they make noises and spread their hands and perhaps miss the first bow. They do not know even this much that the Intention for formal prayer is like the intention for paying a debt of the giving of the poor rate. None of them pays the poor rate twice or pays a debt twice because of anxiety about the intention.

For ANOTHER GROUP there is anxiety about the (pronunciation of) the letters of the (Quranic) chapter of *The Praise*,¹³⁸⁴ so as articulate (the gutturals and palatals). During the formal prayer, their hearts are engaged with that, that the articulation of the letters be correct. One should keep one's heart on the meaning, so that at the time of saying *al-ḥamdu lillāh*, (Q. 1:2)¹³⁸⁵ one's totality should become gratitude, and at *īyāka naʿbudu wa-īyāka nastaʿīn*, (Q. 1:5)¹³⁸⁶ one's totality becomes Unity and weakness, and at *ihdinā al-ṣirāṭa al-mustaqīm* (Q. 1:6)¹³⁸⁷ one's totality becomes humility and lamentation — while he, all of his soul is concerned with whether the articulation of *īyāka* is correct or not. If a person desires to make a request for something from a king, and he says: "*Ayyuhā-l-amīr*"¹³⁸⁸ repeatedly until he pronounces it correctly, there is no doubt that he would be deserving of (the king's) wrath and a slap.

SOME recite the entire Quran¹³⁸⁹ every day and recite it rapidly. While their tongues are racing, their souls are heedless. All of their motivation is in that they count for themselves how many complete recitations they have done. "Today I have read so many sevenths of the Quran." They do not understand that this Quran is an epistle written to mankind. In it, there are commands, prohibitions, promises, threats, parables, sermons, remembrances, terror, and warning. At a threat, one must become all fear; at a promise, one becomes all joy; at a parable, one becomes all credence; at a sermon, one becomes all ears; at something frightening, one becomes all alarm. These are all states of the soul. What is the benefit of the fluttering of the tip of the tongue? He is like the person to whom the king writes a letter and in it, there are orders. He sits, lifts it up, and reads it, but ignores the orders. What is the benefit?

SOME go on Pilgrimage and take up residence in the holy places. They fast, but do not do justice to the fast in guarding their souls and tongues. They do not do justice to Makkah in respecting its sanctity.

¹³⁸⁴ *The Praise (al-Hamd)*: The first chapter of the Quran, more commonly known as *The Opening (al-Fātiḥah)*.

¹³⁸⁵ "Praise be to God."

¹³⁸⁶ "Thee do we worship and Thee do we ask for help."

¹³⁸⁷ "Show us the Straight Path."

¹³⁸⁸ "*Ayyuhā al-amīr*": "O Prince!"

¹³⁸⁹ A complete recitation of Quran from beginning to end is called a *khatam* (conclusion).

They do not do justice to the way by seeking their provisions from the lawful. Their hearts are always with people whom they know from residing in the holy places. They say: "We have stood at so many stations and have been residing in the holy place for so many years." They do not know this much, that it is better that they be in their own homes desiring the Ka'bah than that be in the Ka'bah desiring that people know about one's residence in the holy place and being greedy for someone to give one something. With every morsel that one accepts, miserliness appears in him, for he fears that someone will take it from him or ask for it.

ANOTHER GROUP take up the way of asceticism, wear coarse clothing, eat little food, and are abstemious concerning wealth. However, concerning rank and popularity, they are not abstemious. The people give him gifts and they take joy from that. They keep their state prepared in sight of the people, but they do not know enough that rank is more harmful than wealth, and abandoning it is more difficult, for all sufferings are made easy with the hope of rank. An ascetic is one who abandons rank.

It may be that someone gives him something. He does not accept it, lest it be said that he is not an ascetic. If it is said to him: "Take the gift for appearances and then give it to a poor person," it is harder for him than killing him, even though it is from lawful things, because then people may suppose that he is not an ascetic. This! while he respects the wealthy more than he respects the poor, and he gives (the wealthy) more consideration! All of this is delusion.

ANOTHER GROUP perform all the visible acts so that, for example, they perform a thousand bows of formal prayer a day and thousands of glorifications. They are awake every night and fast every day, but they do not guard their souls in order to cleanse them from bad traits, and their inner selves are full of pride, envy, hypocrisy, and conceit.

Usually such people are ill-natured and frowning. They speak harshly with God Most High's people and, one might say, they are angry or at war with everyone. They do not know this much: that an ill nature voids all acts of worship and that the beginning of all acts of worship is a good nature. One would say that this wretch has placed the people in his debt through his acts of worship and he looks upon all with the eye of contempt. He keeps himself away from others until no person will of himself visit him. He does not know this much: that the chief of all worshippers and ascetics was Mustafa (S), and he was always more cheerful and more good-natured with everyone. He would seat whoever was the more shabbily clothed—so that the rest would gather their clothes away from him—next to himself him and take his hand. What fool is more foolish than he who holds himself superior to the master of the shop? What stupidity is greater than that when these simpletons practice the religion of Mustafa while acting contrary to his behavior!

THE THIRD CATEGORY is that of the Sufis. There is no delusion greater than that which prevails among them. For, however much the path is narrower and the goal more valuable, more error and delusion occurs. The beginning of Sufism is that three stages be mastered:

ONE is that one's self be conquered and that neither carnal appetite nor anger remain in it. It is not that they should be rooted out; rather, they should be subdued so that they cannot take any control over one, except in accordance with the (Religious) Law; as when a fortress is taken and its people not slain, but submit. The fortress of one's breast is in the same way conquered by the authority of the Law.

ANOTHER is that this world and that world have departed from one. The meaning of this is that one has retired from the world of sensory perception and imagining, because everything that comes in sensory perception and the imagination is shared with dumb beasts, and all are the portion of the appetites of the belly, the genitals, and the body. Paradise, too, is not beyond the world of sensory perception and imagination. Everything which admits of form and with which the imagination is concerned becomes to one like grass to the person who has gotten hold of almond cakes and roasted chicken: he has learned that that which comes from the imagination is contemptible, and the portion of simpletons. *And most of the inhabitants of heaven are the simple.*

THE THIRD is that one's totality is seized by God Most High and the majesty and beauty of the Divine Presence. This is that which no form, locus, perception, or imagination can affect. Indeed, to him the business for the imagination, sensory perception, and knowledge will be as sound for the eye and colors for the ear, of which they are necessarily unaware. When he reaches that point, he has reached the beginning of the abode of Sufism. Beyond this, there are for him the stations and states with God Most High, which are difficult to express in words, so that some explain the way of Sufism as unity and becoming one, while others explain it as possession. Anyone, whose foot is not planted firmly in knowledge and experiences this state, cannot put that import into words. Whatever he declares plainly resembles unbelief; however, to himself, it is truth. However, he does not have the power to put it into words. This is a marker of the way of Sufism.

Now look and see the delusion and vanities of others so that some of them know nothing more than patched garments, prayer rugs, and incoherent speech, which they have learned. They have taken the clothing, form, and externals of (the Sufis') behavior. Like them, they sit on prayer rugs with bowed heads and it may be that some devilish insinuation or fancy occur to them. They move their heads and suppose that this itself is their task. These people are like the helpless old woman who puts a cap on her head, dons a cloak, and girds herself with a weapon. She has learned how the fighters in the ranks strut and how they recite verses and epics. She has learned all of their movements. When

she goes to the sultan to have her name recorded in the roll (of warriors), the sultan is such that he does not look at appearances and apparel. He wants proof. He strips her so that she may fight with another warrior in the field. He sees a weak, unfortunate old woman. He commands that she be thrown under the feet of an elephant so that no one ever again has the gall to make light of the king's presence.

THERE ARE SOME who are worse, for they are incapable even of this. They maintain the external appearance and have threadbare clothing. They get hold of fine loin wrappers, brightly colored patches, and collyrium and put them on (the wrappers). They imagine since they have dyed the clothing, that is enough. They do not know that (the Sufis) have dyed their clothing dark¹³⁹⁰ because they were in a tribulation in faith and that the color blue-black¹³⁹¹ was appropriate for that. This wretch is not so immersed (in his Sufism) so as not to wash his clothes, nor is he so overtaken by calamity as to have mourning clothes, nor is he so helpless that wherever there is a tear in his robe he (is not unable) to sew a patch on it to make it tattered. Indeed, he makes tears in new wrappers deliberately so that they will be patched. He still has not made his appearance conform to theirs, for the first wearer of tatters was 'Umar (bin) Khattab (R) who had sewn fourteen patches on his clothing, and some of those patches were leathern.

THERE ARE OTHERS of these people who are still worse. They cannot endure torn and mean clothing. They cannot endure performing the religious obligations and the abandonment of sins. They are not prepared to confess their own helplessness, for they are prisoners of Satan and their carnal appetites. They say: "The soul is important, not the exterior. Our souls are always engaged in formal prayer and with God. We do not have any need of these practices themselves, for that is for the struggle (against the self). It has been commanded for those persons who are the prisoners of their selves, but our selves are dead to us. Our religion has become two measures¹³⁹² and does not become tainted with such things and does not alter." When they look at the worshipful, they say: "These are day laborers without pay." When they look at the religious scholars, they say: "These people have become bound to the Traditions and do not know the path to truth." Such people are deserving of execution and are unbelievers. The consensus of the people (of Muhammad) is that (shedding) their blood is lawful.

THERE IS ANOTHER GROUP who rise in service to the Sufis—the reality of service is that a person sacrifice himself for these people and he

¹³⁹⁰ "dark" (*'ūdī*): the color of aloes wood, nearly black.

¹³⁹¹ "blue-black" (*kabūd*): usually a dark blue, but it shades to black. Names for colors are often less specific in Persian than they are in English. Clearly, in this context Ghazzali is indicating a similarity between *'ūdī* and *kabūd*.

¹³⁹² "two measures" (*dū qullah*): See Note 210.

sacrifices his wealth and totally forgets himself in the work of their love. When a person makes of them a landed estate from which, because of them, he obtains wealth, he makes them his own followers so that his fame in (their) service spreads outside and the people hold in him high regard. He takes from anywhere—the lawful or the unlawful—and gives (of that) to them so that his business not be spoiled and it remain hidden that he is deluded and deceived.

THERE ARE OTHERS who follow the way of asceticism completely and subjugate their carnal appetites. They give the totality of themselves to God Most High and sit in seclusion remembering (God). Their states begin to show themselves so that they obtain information of anything they desire. If they commit a lapse, they undergo chastisement. It may happen that they begin to see the angels and the prophets well, in likeness and in form. It may happen that they see themselves in the heavens, for example, and that they see the angels. The true nature of this, even if it is correct, is that it is like a dream which is correct and true, but that comes to a sleeper in the imagination, while this comes to the imagination of the conscious person. He is deluded by that vision, so that he says: "Everything that is in the seven heavens and seven climates was shown to me many times!" They suppose that this (vision) itself is the ultimate goal of the saints, yet he himself has not yet understood one hair of the wonders of handiwork of God Most High in (His) creation. He imagines that whatever is in existence is that which has been disclosed to him. When this state appears, he imagines that he has achieved perfection and he engages in rejoicing for this and does not search further. Perhaps that self which had been subdued begins to reappear gradually, while he himself imagines that since such things have been shown to him, he is safe from his inner self and has achieved perfection. This is an enormous delusion. Indeed, one cannot trust any of this. One can trust him whose nature changes and becomes obedient to the Law so that in him no trait retains any power within him.

Shaykh Abu al-Qasim Gurgani has said that there is nothing miraculous in walking on water, flying through the air, or giving information about the unseen. A saintly miracle¹³⁹³ is that a person become command entirely; that is, his totality becomes obedience and command, so that nothing forbidden touches him. This is appropriate for confidence. However, it is possible that all of the other is from Satan, for Satan too has knowledge of the unseen. Those who are called soothsayers are given information about many matters, and strange things affect them. Confidence is in this, that he and his necessity depart and the (Religious) Law take its place.

¹³⁹³ "miracle" (*karāmat*): *karāmat* is a miracle performed by a saint or a prophet as opposed to *muʿjizah*, which is a miracle performed by God.

If thou cannot sit upon a lion, have no fear; when thou hast cast underfoot and subdued that dog of rage which is in thy breast, thou will have sat upon a lion. If thou cannot give information of the unseen, have no fear; when thou hast understood the faults and delusions that are from the self and hast become aware of their harm and falseness, thy (knowledge of thy) fault is thine unseen; thou will have obtained information from the unseen. If thou cannot to walk upon water or fly in the air, have no fear; when a halting place appears for thee beyond sensory perception and imagination and thou hast walked upon it, thou will have walked upon water and flown through the air. If thou cannot cross the desert in one night, have no fear; when thou hast traversed the valleys of the world and put the workhouse of the world behind thee, thou will have crossed the desert. If thou cannot place thy foot atop the peak of a great mountain in one step, have no fear; for if thou hast put thy foot on a single dram of the doubtful,¹³⁹⁴ thou will have passed the Ascent that God Most High has so called in the Quran, as He said: *He has not attempted the Ascent; Ah! What will convey unto thee what the Ascent is!* (Q. 90:11-12)¹³⁹⁵ These are some of the delusions of these people, but a complete discussion of them would be prolonged.

THE FOURTH CATEGORY is the powerful and the lords of wealth. There are many of the conceited and the self-deluded among them. They spend money on mosques, hospices, and bridges, but it may be that they have earned (that money) unlawfully. It is a religious obligation to give the money to its rightful owners. They build so that their sins are increased and they imagine that they have accomplished something!

SOME spend of lawfully acquired money in construction, but their purpose may be hypocritical. If they spend a dirham or a dinar, they want their names stamped upon the fired bricks. If it is said: "Do not write (thy name on the bricks), or write a different name," God Most High knows that he who has done this cannot stand hearing this. The sign of this hypocrisy is that there may be in his vicinity or neighborhood some poor people who are in need of a loaf of bread. He cannot give it to them, even though doing so would be better, for "*So-and-so built this, may God lengthen his life*" cannot be inscribed upon fired bricks in his forehead.

THERE ARE SOME who spend from lawful money in sincerity, but upon decoration and ornaments. They imagine that such works are good.

¹³⁹⁴ "the doubtful" (*shubhat*): the uncertainty about the lawfulness (*halāl*) or the unlawfulness (*harām*) of some thing or act.

¹³⁹⁵ The Quranic passage then explains what the Ascent is: *It is to free a slave, and to feed in the day of hunger an orphan near of kin, or some poor wretch in misery, and to be of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to pity.* (Q. 90:13-17)

but two iniquities come from this: one is that the people's souls while at prayer are distracted and lose their humility. The other is that they may desire the same in their homes too and the world may become attractive in their eyes; (this), while they think that they have accomplished something.

The Messenger (S) has said: "When a mosque is adorned and the Scripture is embellished with gold and silver, may it be destroyed upon your (heads)!" and the flourishing of mosques is by (means of) present, submissive, and humble souls. Perhaps, one has been disgusted by the world. Whatever (in the mosque) detracts from humbleness and embellishes the world in the soul is the destruction of the mosque. This simpleton destroys the mosque while supposing that he has performed a great deed!

THERE ARE SOME who like the poor to gather about their doors so that the activity may be known in the city; or, they give voluntary charity to persons who are glib tongued and well known; or, they spend upon a group who are to spend it on the way to perform the Pilgrimage; or, they give it to a dervish hospice so that all will know of it and thank them. If it is said that it would be better for thee to spend it on the deserving rather than on journey of the Pilgrimage, he cannot (do that) because his pleasure lies in the praise and gratitude of those people. He imagines that he is doing a good deed.

Someone consulted with Bishr Hafi: "I have 2,000 lawfully gained dirhams. I want to perform the Pilgrimage." (Bishr) said: "Dost thou go to sightsee or to please God Most High?" He answered: "To please God." (Bishr) said: "Go and give (the money) to debtors, orphans, those who have families; for that comfort which thou deliverest to the Muslims is better than a hundred Pilgrimages after the Pilgrimage of Islam."¹³⁹⁶ Then the man said: "I find the desire for the Pilgrimage greater in myself." (Bishr) said: "Thou didst not obtain this money for that purpose. Until thou spendest it to no purpose, thy self will not settle down."

SOME are themselves so miserly that they give nothing more than the poor tax. Then, they give that poor tax and the tenth to persons who are in their service, such as teachers and students so that their magnificence will remain in place with their assembling (about them); as the instructor who gives the poor tax to his own students, but if they leave him, he does not. This is in lieu of performance, and he knows that he gives it in exchange for (the receiver's) apprenticeship. He imagines that he has paid the poor tax. Perhaps, he gives it to persons who are continually in the service of great lords and, through (the lord's)

¹³⁹⁶ "the Pilgrimage of Islam" (*Hajj-i Islām*): the Pilgrimage which is incumbent upon every able-bodied Muslim who has the means once in his or her life. The assumption of the discussion is that the man has already fulfilled that obligation.

intercession, he gives the poor tax to those persons so that (the lord's and the servants) will be obligated to him. With this amount of the poor tax money, he desires to satisfy a number of goals. Perhaps, they also have expectations of gratitude and praise; and they give the poor tax!

SOME are themselves so miserly that they do not even pay the poor tax. They keep their wealth and claim to be devout. They perform formal prayer at night and fast during the day. They are like the person who has a headache and applies the medicine to his heels. This promise-breaker does not understand that his illness is miserliness, not overeating; and its treatment is spending, not enduring hunger. This and its like are the delusions of lords of wealth. No class of these will be saved unless they acquire knowledge—such as that which is in this book—in order to recognize the harm to devotion, the delusions of the self, and the deceit of Satan. Then, the love for God Most High will triumph over him and the world will depart from him, except that amount which is necessary. He will have set his death before him and will engage in nothing save the preparation for that. This is easy for whomever God Most High and Sanctified has made it easy. *Peace! [May God grant us success in that which Thou lovest and approvest.*

*The Book of the Destroyers of the Alchemy of Happiness has been completed. Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds, and may the blessings of God be upon Muhammad and his family and the righteous Companions.]*¹³⁹⁷

¹³⁹⁷ The additional ending in Arabic between the brackets is from the AA text. HK concludes with "Peace!"

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

by IMAM GHAZZALI

[In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate]

THE FOURTH PILLAR: CONCERNING THE DELIVERERS

In this Pillar, there are also ten chapters:

THE FIRST CHAPTER: Concerning Repentance

THE SECOND CHAPTER: Concerning Patience and Gratitude

THE THIRD CHAPTER: Concerning Fear and Hope

THE FOURTH CHAPTER: Concerning Poverty and Asceticism

THE FIFTH CHAPTER: Concerning Truthfulness and Sincerity

THE SIXTH CHAPTER: Concerning Reckoning and Guarding

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER: Concerning Meditation and Regret

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER: Concerning Trust and the Unity of God

THE NINTH CHAPTER: Concerning Love and Zeal

THE TENTH CHAPTER: Concerning Death and the States
of the Hereafter

CHAPTER ONE: CONCERNING REPENTANCE

Know that repentance is returning to God Most High. It is the first step of the disciples and the beginning of the path of the Wayfarers. No human being can escape this; for, being completely free of sin, from the beginning to the end, is the work of angels. Being immersed in sin and transgression all one's life is the occupation of Satan, but turning back from the way of sin to the way of devotion by means of repentance is the work of a human being and of mankind. Whoever has made reparations for his past shortcomings with repentance has established his lineage to Adam. Whoever has stubbornly persisted in sin to the end of his life, has established his lineage to Satan. However, it is not possible for a person to spend his entire life in devotion, as he was created at the beginning deficient and without intelligence. First, carnal appetite, which is the tool of Satan, was put in control over him. That intelligence which is the enemy of passion and is the light of the essence of the angels was created after the establishment of the carnal appetite (in him) and its seizing the fortress of the breast in conquest. The self became accustomed to and familiar with it. Then, when intelligence necessarily appeared, there was a need for repentance and the exertion to retake that fortress and to drive Satan out. Therefore, repentance is necessary for human beings and it is the first step of the Wayfarers, following the awakening that results from the light of reason and religion. So long as one does not distinguish that path from the paths of error and going astray, there is no religious obligation except repentance, which means the turning back from the paths of error and going astray, and returning to (True) Path.

THE VIRTUE AND SPIRITUAL REWARD OF REPENTANCE

Know that God Most High has commanded all believers and all mankind to repentance and has said: *And turn unto God together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed.* (Q. 24:31) He has commanded that whoever holds the hope of success (in the Hereafter) must repent. The Messenger (S) has said: "The repentance of whoever repents before the sun rises in the west¹³⁹⁸ is accepted." He said: "Do not stand where the people pass, called the place of boasting, for there is the person who stands there and laughs at whoever passes him. He says unseemly things to every woman who comes by. He will not rise from the place until hell

¹³⁹⁸ "the sun rises in the west": one of the signs of the end of the world.

becomes obligatory for him, unless he repents." And the Messenger (S) said: "I repent seventy times a day and seek forgiveness."

And he said: "Whoever has repented for his sins, God Most High causes his sins to be forgotten by the angels who have recorded them against him and to be forgotten by his hands, feet, and the place where he has sinned, so that when he comes to God Most High they will not bear witness against him." And he said: "God Most High accepts the repentance of His servant before his soul reaches his throat and becomes a death rattle." And he said: "God Most High has spread open His Hand for the person who sins during the day and repents before night and who sins during the night and repents before day. He accepts (repentance) until that time when the sun shall rise in the west."

'Umar Khattab (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "Repent, for I repent a hundred times a day." And (the Messenger) said: "There is no human being who has not sinned, but the best of the sinners are the repenters." And he said: "Whoever repents of his sins is like the person who has never committed a sin." And he said: "Repentance of sins is that one never return to them." And the Messenger (S) said: "O Ayishah, *Lo! As for those who sunder their religion and become schismatics, no concern at all hast thou with them.* (Q. 6:159) They are heretics.¹³⁹⁹ There is repentance for all who have sinned, except the heretics. There is no repentance for them. I loathe them and they loathe me."

And he said: "When Abraham (A) was carried to the sky, he saw a man committing adultery with a woman (on the earth). He supplicated to God for them that they be destroyed. He saw another committing a sin and offered a supplication for him. Then, he received a revelation: 'O Abraham, let my servants achieve a result from one out of three deeds: If he repents, I shall accept it; if he asks for forgiveness, I shall forgive him; or he will have a child who will worship Me and I shall make him useful for (the father). Hast thou not learned that one of My Names is the Patient?'"

And 'Ayishah (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High has not learned of the regret of any of his servants for a sin that He has (already) forgiven him before he asks for forgiveness." And he said: "There is a doorway in the west, its breadth is the journey of seventy years. It is flung open for repentance. It has been open from the day the heavens and the earth were created and shall remain open until the sun rises in the west." And he said: "On Mondays and Thursdays, deeds are displayed. (The repentance of) anyone who has repented is accepted; whoever has sought forgiveness shall be forgiven. But the persons whose souls are full of pride will continue as they were." And he (S) said: "The

¹³⁹⁹ "heretics" (*ahl-i bid'at*); or "innovators" in religion.

repenter is beloved by God. Whoever repents, it is for him as though he had not sinned."

And he said: "God Most High is more pleased at His servant's repentance than the Arab in the desert who, when he lays his head down and falls asleep, has a camel upon which all provisions, food, and water are loaded. When he wakes up, he does not see the camel. He goes and searches much until it is to be feared that he will perish of hunger and thirst and his living soul depart from him. He says: 'I shall go back to where I was and lie on the ground until I die.' He comes to that place and lays his head on his forearm hopelessly until he should die. In that misery, he falls asleep. When he awakens, he finds that his camel has returned safely and is standing by his head with the load of provisions and saddle on its back intact. He wants to express his gratitude and he says: 'O my God, I am Thy servant,' but from joy his tongue errs and he says instead: 'O Thou my servant, I am Thy god.' God Most High rejoices more at the repentance of His servant than that servant at the finding of his camel and food."

THE TRUE NATURE OF REPENTANCE

Know that the beginning of repentance is the appearance of the illumination of spiritual insight and faith, for in that light it is seen that sin is a fatal poison. When one understands that one has consumed much of that poison and is approaching destruction, regret and alarm necessarily appear in one. When a person learns that he has consumed poison, he becomes regretful and is frightened. Out of regret, he inserts his finger into his throat in order to induce vomiting. Because of that alarm, he arranges for the medicine that will counter the effect of that poison in order to expel it from himself. It is the same when he comprehends that every carnal appetite to which he has given rein is like honey in which there is a poison. It is sweet for the moment, but stings in the end.

In him, regret appears for the past. A fire from the fire of fear ignites within his soul. He sees his own destruction in that fire of fear. The greed and appetite for sinning is burned up within him and the carnal appetite is transformed into regret. He determines to make up for the past and also not to return to that in the future. He tears off the garments of injustice and spreads the carpet of faithfulness. He alters all of his movements and his rests. Before, all was merriment, wantonness, and heedlessness; now he is all weeping, sorrow, and regret. Before, all of his companionship was with the heedless, now it is with the spiritually insightful. Thus, the essence of repentance is regret. The corollaries are the transformation of states and the removal of all his parts from sin and transgression to devotion and assent.

DISCLOSING THAT REPENTANCE IS A DUTY INCUMBENT UPON EVERY PERSON AND AT ALL TIMES

As for repentance's being a duty incumbent upon every person and at all times, thou recognizest that because every person who has attained puberty and has been an unbeliever is required to repent for his unbelief (when becoming a Muslim). If he be a Muslim and holds that faith in imitation of his mother and father, he confesses it with his tongue, but neglects it in his heart. It is a requirement that he repent of that neglect and do what he should so that his heart be made aware and gain knowledge of the true nature of faith. We do not intend by this awareness that he master the proofs, as are stated in scholastic theology—that is not incumbent upon everyone; rather that the power of faith become the conqueror and master of his soul so that only its precepts remain to him. He possesses the precepts at that time when all that occurs in the kingdom of his body, all are by the command of faith, not by the command of Satan. Whenever there is a sin, faith is imperfect. As the Messenger (S) said: "A person committing adultery is not a Muslim at the time of the adultery. (A person) stealing is not a Muslim at the time of the theft." He does not intend that (a Muslim) is an unbeliever in that circumstance, but that there are many branches and limbs for faith. One of these branches is that one know that adultery is a fatal poison. If one knows that he is drinking poison, he does not drink. Therefore, in that circumstance, the power of carnal appetite has routed his faith because adultery is a Destroyer, so that faith has vanished through that heedlessness, so that the smoke of the darkness of doubt has cloaked the light (of faith).

Now, thou hast understood that repentance first for unbelief is a duty. If one is not an unbeliever, (one must repent) for habitual and imitative faith. So, even if thou hast done this, usually one is not free of sin: repenting for that is a duty. Even if one is devoid of sin externally, internally one is not devoid of the seeds of those sins such as the greed for food and drink, the greed for talk, the love of wealth and rank, envy, pride, hypocrisy, and the like of those Destroyers. All of these are betrayals of the soul and are the roots of sins. One must repent of all of these so that each one is cut off by the sharp edge of moderation. One must make that appetite obedient to the intellect and the Law, and this is accomplished with lengthy striving.

And even if one is devoid of that, one is not devoid of evil insinuations, the whisperings of the self, and unfulfillable fancies. Repenting for all of them is a duty. And even if one is devoid of those, he is not also devoid of the neglect of the remembrance of God Most High in some circumstances. The root of deficiencies is the forgetting of God Most High—even if just for a moment. One must repent for that too. And

if, for example, it happens that one is always meditating and remembering (God), and one is never free of meditation and remembrance, there are still different and varied stations; each one of those is deficient with respect to the ones above it. Satisfaction with a deficient level when one more perfect is possible is being shortchanged and a loss. Repentance for that is a duty.

That which the Messenger (S) said: "Every day I repent and ask forgiveness seventy times," may have been because his work was continually progressing and increasing. At every foothold that he reached, he would see a perfection which had been abridged in the previous place. He would seek forgiveness for the previous step and repent. For, if a person does some work from which he is able to get a dirham, when he gets it, he is happy. But, if he knows that he could have gotten a dinar for that while he had been satisfied with a dirham, he becomes sad and is put to shame so that when he does receive a dinar he rejoices and supposes that there is nothing beyond that. When he has learned that he would have been able to get a jewel worth a thousand dinars, he again is put to shame and regrets his own fault, and he regrets it and repents. For this, it has been said: "*The good deeds of the pious are the bad deeds of the nearest to God.*" The perfection of the pious is deficiency with respect to the saints, for which they ask forgiveness.

QUESTION: If someone asks: When one has repented for unbelief and sin, repenting for heedlessness and shortcomings in attaining greater degrees is one of the virtues, not one of the religious obligations. Why didst thou say that this repentance is also a necessary duty?

THE ANSWER is that there are two kinds of necessary duty:

ONE (DUTY) is that which we call, according to the level of the common folk, the external aspect of the decree: that amount in which they engage so that the world not be ruined and they attend to a worldly livelihood. That is what will save them from the punishment of hell.

THE SECOND DUTY is that which the common folk do not have the strength to endure. Anyone who does not perform this is saved from the punishment of hell, but not from the punishment of the regret for what is above him. For, in the Hereafter, he will see some above him, as he sees the stars in the sky (in this life). That feeling of missing something and the regret that will come upon him will be a punishment. That repentance of which we spoke is a necessary duty to escape this torment. Just as we often see in this world, when one of (our) peers receives a higher degree, the world becomes constricted and gloomy for another from the feeling of being shortchanged and because of envious regret. It is as though a fire were kindled in his soul, even though he may have achieved deliverance from the punishment of being beaten with sticks, having his hand cut off (for theft), or the confiscation (of his property). It is for this reason that the Day of Resurrection is called the Day of Mutual

Defrauding,¹⁴⁰⁰ for no one is completely free of a sense of being defrauded: the one who had not been devoted (to God) for not (devoting himself to God), and the one who devoted himself to God for not doing even more.

It was for this reason that the way of the prophets and the saints was that they demonstrate devout obedience to God, insofar as they were able, and not stint in that, saying: "This is so that there not be the regret for shortcomings tomorrow."¹⁴⁰¹ What dost thou say to the Messenger's (S) keeping himself hungry?—he knew that eating bread is not forbidden—until 'Ayishah said: "I placed my hand on his stomach and I pitied him. I wept and said: 'Let my soul be thy sacrifice! What would happen if thou ate your fill of the food of this world?' He replied: 'O 'Ayishah, my brothers, the Resolute,¹⁴⁰² have gone before me, seen miracles, and received robes of honor. I fear that if I receive the portion (of my reward) in this world, my degree will be less than their rank. I prefer being patient a few days to losing that which my brothers have."

Jesus (A) had lain down, having placed a stone under his head (as a pillow). Iblis said to him: "Now that thou hast not abandoned the world, art thou sorry?" (Jesus) said: "What have I done?" The devil said: "Thou hast put a stone under thy head and have enjoyed its comfort." Jesus (A) tossed the stone aside. He said: "I have left this as well to thee with the world." The Messenger (S) had put on new shoe straps, but because they appeared good to him, he ordered that the old ones be brought back and put back on the sandals, removing the new ones. When (Abu Bakr), the Truly Righteous, took a drink of milk he realized that there was something doubtful in it. He thrust his finger down his throat (to induce vomiting) until it was feared that he would bring up his life¹⁴⁰³ with that (milk). What dost thou say? Did he not know that according to the common religious opinion, this was not a necessary duty? But the common religious opinion is one thing and the danger which the truly righteous may perceive another. They are the most knowledgeable of mankind with respect to God Most High and the perils of the Way of God. Do not suppose that they had imposed these pains upon themselves frivolously! Follow their example and do not cling to the common religious opinion, which is another story.

¹⁴⁰⁰ "the Day of Mutual Defrauding" (*rūz-i taghābun*): The more usual translation of the phrase is "the Day of Judgment," but I have given a more literal translation in accordance with the point Ghazzali is making, that there will be a sense of loss and missed opportunities at the Resurrection.

¹⁴⁰¹ "tomorrow": the Hereafter.

¹⁴⁰² "my brothers, the Resolute (*ālū al-ʿazm*)": the prophets and messengers who had preceded Muhammad (S).

¹⁴⁰³ "it was feared that he would bring up his life": that is, that he would die. The "doubt" referred to concerns legality, not contamination.

So, from all this thou hast learned that a servant (of God) is never without the need for repentance. It was regarding this that Abu Sulayman Darani (R) says: "If a person weeps for nothing other than the time he has lost, to this extent, this sorrow itself is enough until the time of death. So, what dost thou say about a person who wastes the future as he has wasted the past?" Know that anyone who has a precious jewel and loses it has a right to weep, and if the loss of that also becomes the cause of calamity and punishment, the weeping increases. Every breath is a jewel by which one can hunt eternal happiness. When a person spends it in sin so that it becomes the cause of his destruction, what would his state be if he learned about that suffering? But, that is a suffering that he will learn about when regret will have no profit.

About this God Most High says: *And spend of that wherewith We have provided you before death comes unto one of you and he says: 'My Lord, if only Thou wouldst reprieve me for a little while, then I would give alms and be among the righteous.* (Q. 63:10) It has been said that the meaning of this verse is that the servant (of God) sees the Angel of Death at the time of death. He knows that it is the time of going. Infinite regret descends upon his soul. He says: "O Angel of Death! Give me one day's grace so that I may repent and beg forgiveness." (The Angel of Death) says: "There were many days before. Now, thy life has come to an end and nothing of it is **left**." (The person) says: "Give me one hour's grace!" (The angel) replies: "The hour has come, not one hour is left." When he tastes this draught of hopelessness, the foundation of his faith begins to tremble. If, *God forbid*, in eternity, his ending has been made in adversity, he will depart this world in doubt, anxiety, and wretchedness. If it has been made in happiness, he shall carry the foundation of his faith.¹⁴⁰⁴

About this, said God Most High: *Forgiveness is not for those who do bad deeds until, when death presents itself to one of them, he says: 'Lo! I repent now.'* (Q. 4:16) It has thus been said that God Most High has two secrets for each of His servants: one is that at the time that he comes out of his mother's womb, God Most High says: "I have created thee pure and prepared, and I have given thee thy life in trust. Be alert as to how thou dost return that trust to Me at the time of thy death." The other secret is that at the time of death, God Most High says: "My servant! What hast thou done with that which I entrusted to thee? If thou hast preserved it dutifully, thou shalt obtain thy reward for that; but if thou hast wasted it, prepare thyself! Hell is awaiting thee!"

¹⁴⁰⁴ That is, if he was predestined to die in adversity or happiness, the results would be so.

DISCLOSING THE ACCEPTANCE OF REPENTANCE

Know that when repentance is according to its rules, it will certainly be accepted. When thou hast repented, do not be in doubt about its acceptance. Be in doubt as to whether thy repentance was according to rule or not.

Whoever has understood the true nature of the human soul and what the manner of its connection to the body is, its relationship to the Divine Presence, and what the cause of the veil between it and the (Divine Presence) is, one does not doubt that sin is the cause of the veil and repentance is the cause of acceptance. For, the human soul is, in its origin, a pure essence of the essence of the angels. It is like a mirror in which the Divine Presence shows Itself when, upon departure from this world, (the soul) has not been tarnished. With every sin one commits, a darkness is deposited upon the mirror of the soul; and with every act of devotion, a light attaches itself to it and drives off that darkness from the soul.

The effects of the lights of devotion and the darkness of sins are continually following one another in the mirror. When the darkness has become great and one has repented, the lights of devotion rout the darkness. The soul returns to its clarity and purity. However, if one is so stubborn in one's sinning that the tarnish has reached the essence of the soul, and penetrated it deeply, it will not be receptive to treatment any more. It is like the mirror that has been corroded by tarnish. Such a soul is itself unable to repent, except by (uselessly) uttering with the tongue: "I have repented."

Just as a dirty garment becomes clean when you wash it with soap, the soul is purified of the darkness of sins by lights of devotion. For this the Messenger (S) said: "After every unseemly deed, do some good (deed) so as to erase (the bad)." And he said: "If thou committest so many sins that they reach the heavens and thou then repentest, it will be accepted." And he said: "There is a servant (of God) who goes to Paradise because of his sins." He was asked: "How is that possible?" He replied: "By committing a sin and regretting it. That (regret) is before his eyes until he reaches heaven." It has been said it may be that Iblis says: "Would that I had not thrown him into that sin!" The Messenger (S) said: "Good deeds erase bad deeds as soap the dirt of a garment." And he said: "When Iblis became accursed, he said (to God): 'By Thine Honor, I shall not come out of the soul of a human being so long as there is life in his body.' God Most High said: 'By My honor, I shall not shut the door of repentance upon him so long as there is life in his body.'"

An Ethiopian came to the Messenger (S) and said: "I have done many vile things. Will my repentance be accepted?" (The Messenger) replied: "It will." When he was leaving, he turned back and asked:

"During the time that I was committing sins, did He see me?" (The Messenger) said: "He did." With a cry, the Ethiopian fell down and gave up his spirit.

Fudayl says: "God, may he be honored and glorified, has said to one of the messengers: 'Give the good news to the sinners among my servants that if they repent, I shall accept (their repentance). Frighten the truly righteous (by telling them) that if I were to deal with absolute justice, I would punish them all.'" Talq bin Habib¹⁴⁰⁵ says: "The rights due God Most High are far greater than that which one can fulfill. Make the effort to arise in the morning in repentance and to lie down at night in repentance." Habib bin Thabit¹⁴⁰⁶ says: "The servant (of God) will be shown his sins. As each sin arrives, he will say: 'Ah! I had always feared thee.' Then they will make that of benefit to him because he had feared (that sin)."

Among the Children of Israel, there was one who had committed many sins. He wanted to repent, but did not know whether (his repentance) would be accepted or not. He was directed to someone who was the most worshipful of his era. (The man) asked him: "Is there repentance for me? I have committed many sins and killed ninety-nine people." He replied: "No." (The sinner) slew him too so that (the number of his victims) became an even hundred. Then he was directed to the most knowledgeable person of his era. (The sinner) went to him and asked, saying: "Is there repentance for me?" He answered: "Yes, but thou must leave thine own country as there is corruption here and go to such-and-such a place where the people are righteous." (The sinner) started out and on the way died.¹⁴⁰⁷ The angels of punishment and of mercy disputed over him, each group saying (his soul) was in their jurisdiction. God Most High commanded that the earth be measured and they found that (the deceased had died) one hand's breadth nearer to the country of the righteous. Then the angels of mercy carried away his soul. For this reason, it is apparent that the complete emptiness of sin one's tray of evil deeds (on the scales of justice) is not a prerequisite; but the tray of good deeds must exceed it, even if only by a little, and through that, one achieves salvation.

DISCLOSING VENIAL AND MORTAL SINS

Know that repentance is of sin. However much the sin is smaller, the matter is less serious when one does not persist in them. In the

¹⁴⁰⁵ Talq bin Habib: al-ʿAnazī. Also quoted by Qushayri. Ibn Qutaybah calls him a Traditionist in *Al-Maʿarif*.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Habib bin Thābit: possibly the Habib bin Abi Thabit mentioned by Ibn Khallikan. No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁴⁰⁷ "died": literally, "received the command" (*farman yāft*).

Traditions, it is related that performing formal prayer is the atonement of all sins except mortal sins. Attending the Friday congregational prayer is an atonement because all sins are atoned for by means of the Friday congregational prayer—except mortal sins. God Most High said: *If ye avoid the great (sins) which are forbidden, We will acquit you of your evil deeds...* (Q. 4:31)¹⁴⁰⁸ “If they withhold from mortal sins, We shall forgive venial sins.” Consequently, it is a religious obligation to know which are the mortal sins. The Companions differed concerning this. Some said there are seven. Others said they were more and others fewer. Ibn ‘Abbas heard that Ibn ‘Umar had said: “There are seven mortal sins.” (Ibn ‘Abbas) said: “They are closer to seventy than to seven.” Abu Talib Makki, who compiled *The Food of Hearts*,¹⁴⁰⁹ says: “I have collected all the Traditions and the sayings of the Companions: there are seventeen mortal sins”:

FOUR are of the soul: first, unbelief; second, persistence in sin, even though it be venial, as the person who does bad deeds and does not have (the intention) in his heart ever to repent; another is the hopelessness of the mercy of God Most High which is called “despair”; another is (the idea that one has) immunity from the devices of God Most High, so that one is complacent, (thinking): “I myself am forgiven.”

FOUR are of the tongue: one is bearing false witness so that truth is foiled; second, the defaming of married women¹⁴¹⁰ so that (their) prescribed punishment becomes necessary; third, swearing false oaths by which one takes property or wealth from someone unjustly; fourth, casting spells, for they too are words which are uttered by the tongue.

THREE are of the stomach: one is imbibing wine and all that brings drunkenness; another is consuming the property of an orphan; another is taking and giving usury.¹⁴¹¹

¹⁴⁰⁸ The conclusion of the verse, omitted by Ghazzali, is: *and (We will) admit you by a noble gate.* (Q. 4:31)

¹⁴⁰⁹ *The Food of Hearts*, an important work on Sufism and one of the oldest, by Abu Talib al-Makki (Abu Talib of Makkah), who died AH355/996CE. “He is well grounded in theology and Traditions, and is greatly interested to prove the orthodoxy of Sufi doctrine and practice, so that his famous work, the *Qūt al-Qulūb* [*The Food of Hearts*], is found to contain somewhat more of careful argument and somewhat less of curious quotation. Nevertheless, the book is of primary importance, as being the first—and a very successful—attempt to construct an overall design for orthodox Sufis: ... (it) was carefully studied by al-Ghazali [sic.] and exercised considerable influence on his mode of thought and writing.” [A.J. Arberry, *Sufism*, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1950) p. 68.]

¹⁴¹⁰ “defaming married women” with a false accusation of adultery. The punishment for adultery would be stoning.

¹⁴¹¹ Of the three cited, only the first is properly a sin of the stomach, as we would conceive of it in English. However, in Persian all three are construed with the verb for eating *khwardan*. Using the property of orphans is literally *eating* their property. Similarly, taking usurious interest is literally *eating* usury.

TWO are of the genitalia: adultery and sodomy.

TWO ARE of the hand: killing and stealing in a manner that prescribed punishment becomes necessary.

ONE is of the feet: that is running away from battle with unbelievers, as when one flees from two, or ten flee from twenty. However, if (the odds) are greater (than two to one), flight is lawful.

ONE is of the whole body: that is disobedience to one's mother and father.

Know that these have been acknowledged (as major sins) because for some of them the prescribed punishment¹⁴¹² is obligatory and because for some there are great threats (about them) in the Quran. In their details, there has been some modification, which we have discussed in *The Revival* and cannot be contained in this book. The object of learning this is that one exercise greater caution with regard to these mortal sins.

One must also know that persistence in venial sins is also a mortal sin, even if we say that the performance of religious obligations atone for venial sins. There is no dispute about the fact that if there is a grain of oppression on one's neck for which one has not atoned, so long as one does not requite it, one is not relieved of the responsibility for it. In short, every sin which is related to God Most High has a greater chance of forgiveness than that which is related to injuries to mankind.

In the Traditions, it is related that there are three ledgers of sins: a ledger for the unforgivable and that is attributing partners to God and unbelief; a ledger which is forgivable, and those are the sins between a servant (of God) and God Most High; and a ledger which is not passed over and that is the ledger of injuries to (God's) servants. Know that whatever results in the sorrow of a Muslim is among them, be it to his person, his property, his dignity, his virtue, or to his religion, as in the case of a person who invites people to heresy so as to cut off their religion, or the person who holds an assembly and says things which encourage people to sin.

DISCLOSING THAT BY WHICH VENIAL SINS BECOME MORTAL SINS

Know that there is the hope that a venial sin will be forgiven, but when for some reasons (the sinning) becomes great, the peril also becomes more serious; and they are six:

¹⁴¹² "prescribed punishment (*hadd*): the punishment prescribed by Religious Law (*shari'ah*).

THE FIRST (REASON) is that one persist (in the sin), such as the person who slanders others, wears silken clothing, makes frivolous music, or who repeatedly commits a sin. The effect of this in darkening the soul is tremendous, just as is continuous devotion in brightening the soul. For this, the Messenger (S) said: "The best works are those which are done continually, even if but a **little**." Its similitude is the drops of rainwater falling one after another on a stone. Inevitably, they will make a hole in the stone, but if water falls only once upon it, it does not have that effect. Consequently, whoever is afflicted with a venial sin must ask forgiveness, be remorseful, and determine not to do it again, so that it is said that a mortal sin becomes a venial sin by seeking the forgiveness (of God) and a venial sin becomes a mortal sin by persistence.

THE SECOND is that one considers a (venial) sin trivial and looks at it with scorn. A (venial) sin becomes major through this, while the sin one considers great becomes minor because, from considering a sin great, faith and fear arise. (Faith and fear) protect the soul from the darkness of sinning so that its effect is minimized. But holding (venial) sins to be minor is a kind of heedlessness from which a fondness for sin arises. This demonstrates that it has established a relationship with the soul, and the object of all is the soul. Whatever more affects the soul is more serious.

In the Traditions, it is related: "The believer sees his sin as a mountain looming above him. At every moment, he fears that it will tumble down upon him. The hypocrite sees his sin as a fly which sits upon his nose and flies away." It has been said: "The sin which is unforgivable is that which the servant (of God) says: 'This is easy; would that all of my sins were like this!'" Revelation came to some of the prophets: "Do not look at the triviality of a sin, look at the greatness of Him Whose command thou dost disobey." The more a servant (of God) knows of the majesty of God Most High, the greater his sins appear to him. One of the Companions says: "Ye commit sins which ye think are like hairs, while we would consider each one of them a mountain." In summary, the wrath of God Most High is hidden in sins. It may be in that which thou didst consider more trivial, as He said: *Ye counted it a trifle, but in the sight of God, it is very great.* (Q. 24:15)

THE THIRD is that one rejoices for a sin and considers it a windfall and a victory, and takes pride in that. Perhaps one says haughtily: "I deceived so-and-so and got some money from him. I chastised him and called him names. I embarrassed him and put him to shame in an argument with him," and the like. Anyone who takes delight in his own perdition and boasts about it demonstrates that his soul is become black, and destruction is from that. *May God save us from that!*

THE FOURTH is that because his sins remain veiled, he imagines that this itself is a mark of (divine) favor with respect to him. He does not fear that this is a respite and a consignment to punishment by degrees until he is completely ruined.

THE FIFTH is that one makes the sin public and throws the curtain of God Most High off from himself.¹⁴¹³ Because of him, it may happen that another also desire (to imitate him) and one also obtains the punishment for the desire and sinning of others. If he openly encourages someone and makes his arrangements for him to instruct him, the crime itself is doubled. The forefathers have said: "There is no treachery to a Muslim greater than that thou makest a sin seem trivial to him."

THE SIXTH is that the person who commits the sin be learned and a leader. Because of his deeds, others are emboldened and say: "If it was not supposed to be done, he would not have done it!"—as when a learned scholar wears silken garments and goes to rulers and accepts their money. In debate, he lets loose the tongue of fatuity and taunts his own peers. He glories in the multiplication of rank and property. All of his students follow his example and they too become like their teacher. Other students follow their example. From each one of these a region is ruined, for the people of every city looks to one of them. The mischief of all necessarily falls upon the shoulders of the one who is emulated. With respect to this it has been said: "Blessed is he who dies and his sins die with him."

However, the sins of the person who has done thus will endure a thousand years after his death. One of the religious scholars of the Children of Israel repented. A revelation came to the messenger of the era that he should tell (the repenting scholar): "If the sin had been between thee and Me, I would have forgiven it. Now take it that thou hast repented; what dost thou do concerning the people thou hast led astray and who have remained thus?" It is for this reason that the learned are in the peril that their sins will be multiplied a thousandfold, just as their acts of devotion are multiplied a thousandfold because they receive the spiritual merit of those who follow their example. This is the reason that it is more incumbent upon the learned that they not sin, and if they do, they should conceal it. Indeed, if there is something permissible by which the people are encouraged to become heedless, (the learned) should abstain from it.

¹⁴¹³ That is, by making his sins public he has thrown off the curtain with which God Most High had concealed them so that others not follow his example.

Zuhri says: "Before this we used to laugh and play, but now that we have become leaders, not even a smile is proper for us." It is a great crime for someone to relate the sins of a scholar, for because of that many people fall away from the path (of God) and become emboldened. Therefore, all should conceal (their) lapses, and the concealment of the lapses of the scholars is more necessary.¹⁴¹⁴

DISCLOSING THE PREREQUISITES OF REPENTANCE AND THEIR SIGNS

Know that basis of repentance is remorse and the result of that remorse is a resolution that appears (in one). Now, the sign of this remorse is that one is continually in sorrow and regret. One is always weeping, lamenting, and beseeching. How can any person who finds himself on the verge of perdition be devoid of regret and sorrow? If he has a sick child and a Christian or Zoroastrian doctor says that the illness is dangerous and it is feared that (the child) will die, it is obvious what flame of sorrow and fear will befall the soul of the father. And it is obvious that his own person is even dearer to him than that of the child.¹⁴¹⁵ God and the Messenger of God are more truthful than the Christian physician, and the fear of ruin in the Hereafter is greater than the fear of the death of a child. The indication of a sin's leading to the indignation of God Most High is more apparent than the indication that an illness will lead to death. Thus, if fear and regret do not come to a person from these, it is because he has not yet come to the belief in the blight of sinning. However much more hotly that fire burns, its effect in the doing penance for sins is that much the greater. For, the verdigris and darkness that has been deposited upon his soul from sins will not melt except with the fire of regret and remorse for them. The soul commences to become cleansed and tender in that heat.

It is related in the Traditions: "Sit with the repentant, for their souls are more tender." However much more the soul has become limpid, it becomes that much more disgusted by sin. The sweetness of sinning is converted into bitterness in the soul. A prophet interceded for one of the Children of Israel in exchange for his repentance. A revelation came:

¹⁴¹⁴ This concealment is motivated by a desire to prevent emulation by the impressionable and, of course, differs from the concealment of the hypocrite who conceals sins in order to commit them while profiting from a public image of rectitude. In other words, this concealment is motivated by the public good, while the concealment of the hypocrite is motivated by a desire for personal advantage.

¹⁴¹⁵ While this statement may seem somewhat callous to today's readers, it should be remembered that until the advances of medicine in the past few centuries, perhaps half of infants born died within the first year or two of life. Consequently, parents were inured to the common possibility of the death of small children and endeavored to have as many as possible to compensate. In such a situation, natural sentiment is to a degree dulled by harsh reality.

“By My honor, I shall not accept his repentance even though all the inhabitants of the heavens intercede on his behalf as long as the sweetness of those sins remains in his soul.”

Know that sinning, even though it has a pleasurable nature, is for the repentor as honey laden with poison. A person who has tasted it once will endure much sorrow. When he thinks about that again, his hairs rise like blades out of the repugnance for that. The appetite for (sin) and its sweetness are covered by the fear of its harm. One must perceive the bitterness in all sins, for the sins that one has committed are poisonous in that in them lies the wrath of God Most High, and all sins are like that.

HOWEVER THE RESOLUTION that comes to one from this remorse is dependent upon three things: the present, the past, and the future:

AS FOR THE PRESENT, it is that one abandon all sins and occupy oneself with one's religious duties.

AS FOR THE FUTURE, it is that one resolve to restrain oneself from (sin) to the end of one's life and that one bind oneself to God Most High with strong bonds so that one never again returns to those sins, nor commits a fault in religious obligations, like the sick person who knows that fruit is harmful to him and resolves not to eat any. At the moment of resolve, there is no laxity nor hesitation, even though it is possible that a craving overcome him. It is not possible that one be able to accomplish repentance except by withdrawal, silence, and the lawful morsels one obtains, or one is able to earn. So long as one does not withhold one's hand from the doubtful, repentance will not be total. So long as one has not crushed the carnal appetites, one cannot withhold one's hand from the doubtful. It has been said thus: “If whoever is dominated by an appetite strives to restrain that desire seven times, it will become easy for him.”

AS FOR THE RESOLUTION ABOUT THE PAST, it is dependent upon making up for the past by means of considering what his obligation is with respect to the rights of God Most High and with respect to the rights of (His) servants in the faults he has committed. As for that which is due to God Most High, there are two kinds: the performance of religious obligations and the abandonment of sin:

As for the performance of religious obligations, one must reflect upon the period from attaining puberty (to the present) and review it day by day. If one has missed a formal obligatory prayer, or was not wearing clean clothing, or the declaration of Intention for the formal obligatory prayer, or for fasting, or for any other act of worship contingent upon a declaration of Intention was not correct, either because one did not know it, or there was some flaw or doubt in one's belief—one should make them all up. One must calculate the poor rate from the time when one (first) had property but did not give to the deserving, or when one (first) had gold and silver utensils for which one did not pay the poor rate. All

of these calculations must be done to make known (the amount due) and it must be paid. If one has committed faults with respect to the fasting of Ramadan, or forgot the Declaration of Intention, or did not make it according to rule, these too (must be made up). From among all of these (lapses), those which one knows for certain must be made up. As for those about which one is not sure, one should make a probable estimate and be diligent, or one should hold calculated those which one knows with certainty and make up the rest. This is more complete. Or, it is permissible (if) one considers that which is a probable estimate also as (justly) calculated.

As for the sins, one must interrogate the eyes, ears, hands, tongue, belly, and all the organs as to what sins have been committed from the onset of puberty. If a mortal sin has been committed, such as adultery, sodomy, theft, winebibbing, and those things for which God Most High's punishment is a duty, one must repent for all of them. It is not required that one confess to the ruler so that the (Islamic legal) punishments be imposed upon him. Rather, one should conceal them and compensate for them with much devotion. The same is valid for venial sins. For example, if one has looked upon someone not of the prohibited degrees,¹⁴¹⁶ or has laid an impure hand upon the Holy Quran,¹⁴¹⁷ or one has sat in the mosque in a state of impurity,¹⁴¹⁸ or has listened to the music of a stringed instrument; one must atone for all of these with its opposite so as to erase them, for God says: *Lo! Good deeds annul bad deeds.* (Q. 11:111)

However, whatever is the opposite has a greater effect: the atonement for listening to the music of stringed instruments is to listen to the Quran and (to attend) edifying lectures; the atonement for sitting in the mosque in a state of impurity is to remain in seclusion¹⁴¹⁹ or by performing acts of worship. The atonement for touching the Quran with unpurified hands is to honor the Quran by much reading from it. The atonement for drinking wine is that one not drink a lawful drink which one likes and gives it away in charity, so that the light resulting from (the atonement) obliterates every darkness (upon the soul) which has resulted from it. Indeed, the atonement for every merriment and wantonness one has done in the world is sorrow and the pain that one endures from the world. For, because of pleasure and the comfort of the world, the soul

¹⁴¹⁶ "someone not of the prohibited degrees" (*nā mahram*): someone with whom marriage (and therefore sexual intercourse) is possible.

¹⁴¹⁷ That is, one has touched the Quran in a state of ritual impurity, without performing the obligatory ablution.

¹⁴¹⁸ "a state of impurity" (*junub*): This state, most commonly after sexual intercourse, requires a full ablution (*ghusl*: bath), before performing acts of devotion or worship.

¹⁴¹⁹ "to remain in seclusion" (*i'tikāf*): retreat or seclusion, usually in a mosque or some other religious establishment, for a period of time.

hangs upon the world and becomes bound to it, but with every tribulation it suffers in the world, the soul separates from it and the soul is released from it, and it supposes (it) an abomination.

It is for this that it is related in the Traditions: "Every trouble that afflicts a believer, even if it be but thorns in his feet, is an atonement for his sins." The Messenger (S) said: "There are some sins that cannot be atoned for except by sorrow." In another Tradition: "One does not atone for them except with anxiety about one's family and their livelihood." 'Ayishah (R) says: "God throws anxiety in the soul of the servant (of God) who has many sins and does not have the acts of devotion to atone for them." Do not think to say: "This anxiety is not under his control, for one may also be anxious about worldly affairs, and this is itself a sin; so how is it atonement?" This is not the case. Indeed, everything which turns thy soul away from the world in disgust is to thy good, even though it be not by thy choice. Rather, if the world were to be filled with joy and that were the desired end, the world would have become thy Paradise. Joseph (A) asked Gabriel (A): "How didst thou leave that old man—my father Jacob (A)—in sorrow?" (Gabriel) replied: "In the sorrow of a hundred mothers of slain children." (Joseph) said: "How didst thou compensate him for that?" (Gabriel) answered: "With the spiritual reward of a hundred martyrs."

As for the oppressions against the servants (of God), one must reckon his own transactions with all people. Indeed, (he must) count his social intercourse and his speech, so that he may clear the accounts with whoever has a claim on him for property or money, or (something) due because of his causing someone trouble, or slander. Whatever can be given back must be returned. Whatever requires quittance from someone, that quittance must be sought. If he has killed someone, he must surrender himself to (the dead person's) heirs for retaliation or forgiveness. He should seek out the owner of what he has obtained—dirhams, grain, or seed—and return (the goods) to him. If (the owner) cannot be found, he should give it to his heirs. This is extremely difficult, especially for officials and businessmen, as their transactions are numerous. It is difficult for every one concerning slanderous talk; one cannot seek out all of them. If this has become impossible, there is no way except to increase one's acts of devotion until enough devotion is collected so that when that which is due others (for one's transgressions against them) are deducted from his devotions at the Resurrection, an amount sufficient (for his salvation) will remain.

EXCURSUS: [EIGHT ACTS THAT ATONE FOR SINS
AFTER THEIR COMMISSION]¹⁴²⁰

Know that whoever commits a sin while repenting must quickly atone and make amends for that. The (non-Prophetic) Traditions point to eight acts that are the atonement for a sin after its commission:

Four are in the soul: one is repentance or the resolution to repent; another is the desire not (to sin) again; third is that one be chastened, and the fourth is the hope or forgiveness.

Four are of the body: one is that one perform two bows of formal prayer. After that one seeks forgiveness from God seventy times¹⁴²¹ and recites "*Glory to My Great Lord and with His praise*"¹⁴²² one hundred times; third, one fasts for one day; fourth, which is found in some of the non-Prophetic Traditions, is that one performs a good ablution and goes to the mosque and performs two bows of formal prayer.

In the Traditions, it is related: "When thou hast committed a sin in private, perform acts of devotion in private in atonement for that. If (the sin was committed) in public, perform the act of devotion in public." And know that seeking God's forgiveness with the tongue where the soul is not present has no profit. It is the partnership of the soul with that, in which there is fear and supplication in seeking forgiveness, and it should not be devoid of shame and contrition. When these exist, even if one has not resolved to repent, there is hope. In short, asking God's forgiveness with the tongue while the soul is disengaged is not (entirely) without profit because the tongue is prevented from foolishness for a time, and it is also better than silence,¹⁴²³ for when the tongue becomes accustomed to goodness, it inclines more towards the words of the asking of forgiveness than to curses, foolishness, etc.

A disciple said to 'Uthman Maghribi:¹⁴²⁴ "There are times when I remember God without my soul." He said: "Give thanks that one of your organs has been placed in (His) service." In this, there is (an opportunity for) deception for Satan, who says: "Silence thy tongue from remembering God; for if thy soul is not present, it is disrespectful." In their reply to Satan, people are of three kinds:

¹⁴²⁰ From the AA text.

¹⁴²¹ That is, one recites the formula *I seek the forgiveness of God* seventy times. One version of this runs: *I seek God's forgiveness, my Lord, from all sins, and I turn to him in penitence; there is no power and no strength save in God, the Exalted, the Tremendous.*

¹⁴²² In Arabic: *Subhāna rabbiya-l 'azīm wa biḥamdihi.*

¹⁴²³ "it is also better than silence": that is, it is better than not uttering the pious phrases. In other situations, silence is often recommended. See following paragraphs.

¹⁴²⁴ 'Uthman Maghribi: Abu 'Uthmān Sa'īd bin Sallām al-Maghribī. 'Attar devotes a section to him in the *Tadhkirah* in which he says the shaykh live 130 years. He became a hermit for twenty years and had a pleasant voice in the *samā'*. (See Ch. 8 of the First Pillar about *samā'*.) 'Attar lavishes praise on his asceticism and self-discipline.

One is the person who goes before. He says: "Thou speakest the truth. To spite thee, I shall also engage my soul." This is throwing salt on Satan's wounds.

Another is the oppressor. He says: "Thou speakest the truth. There is no profit in the movements of the tongue without the presence of the soul." He silences his asking for God's forgiveness and imagines that he has done something clever, while in fact he has risen in friendship and in accord with Satan.

The third keeps to the middle. He says: "Remembrance of God with the soul is better, as a king is better than a moneychanger, but a moneychanger is better than a sweeper." It is not necessary that anyone who is unable to rule as a king to give up money changing too and become a sweeper.

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT FOR NOT REPENTING

Know that the treatment of persons who do not repent is that thou know the reason for their persistence in sin and their not repenting. These are five reasons and for each one there is a different treatment:

THE FIRST is that he does not have faith in the Hereafter, or is in doubt about it. We have discussed the treatment of this self-deception in the last chapter of *The Pillar of the Destroyers* in this book.

THE SECOND REASON is that carnal appetite has become so dominant that one does not have the strength to abandon it. Pleasure and carnal appetite have so overwhelmed him that they keep him heedless of the peril of the affair of the Hereafter and the danger of punishment. The veil (between man and God) for most people is the appetites. About this, said the Messenger (S): "God Most High created hell and said to Gabriel: 'Look!' When (Gabriel) looked and saw its awesome terrors, he said: 'By Thine Honor, no one who has heard of its nature will enter into it.' Then, God Most High created the carnal passions surrounding hell and said: 'Look!' (Gabriel) looked and said: 'I fear that no one will be left who does not fall into hell.' Then, He created Paradise and said: 'Look!' When (Gabriel) looked, he said: 'No one who has heard of its nature will not hasten unto it.' Then, He created the misfortunes and bitter matters the are on the way to Paradise and which surround it. He said: 'O Gabriel, look!' (Gabriel) said: 'I looked, by Thine Honor, I fear that no one will go to Paradise because of the multitude of troubles on his way.'"

THE THIRD REASON is that the Hereafter is a promise, while the world is ready cash. Human nature inclines to ready cash. In man's opinion, everything that is on credit is far off and also distant from the soul.

THE FOURTH REASON is that whoever is a believer is determined to repent every day, but he postpones it until tomorrow. At every appetite that appears he says: "Let me do this and I shall not do it again."

THE FIFTH REASON is that sin does not necessarily carry one off to hell; rather, forgiveness is possible. A human being thinks positively with respect to his lot. When an appetite overcomes him, he says: "God Most High will forgive me." He is in the hope of (divine) mercy.

As for the treatment for the first reason, that one does not believe in the Hereafter, we have already explained that.¹⁴²⁵

As for the treatment for one's thinking that the Hereafter is a (future) credit so that one does not abandon the ready cash and the opinion that the Hereafter is distant and one imagines it far from the soul, it is that one know: "Assume that everything which will inevitably come, has come, so much that thy closing of thine eyes and thy death have become real."¹⁴²⁶ Perhaps, it will be today, perhaps it will be tomorrow, perhaps this very hour—that that promised payment will be transformed into cash, and the ready cash of the past will be transformed into a credit and become like a dream.

As for that person who cannot give up pleasure, he must understand that as he cannot endure an hour without satisfying his appetites, how will he endure the fire of hell? How will he endure the deprivation of the delights of Paradise? If he falls ill and there is nothing for him like cold water, and an unknown and unbelieving¹⁴²⁷ physician says to him: "This cold water is harmful to you," how will he oppose his craving in the hope of obtaining a cure? The hope of eternal kingship at the word of God and (His) Messenger is better, for it is the cause of the abandonment of appetite.

As for one who puts off repentance, it is said to him: "Thou postponest it until tomorrow, but the coming of tomorrow is not in thy hands. Perhaps it will not come and thou wilt perish." It is for this reason that in the Traditions it is related: "Most of the clamor of the inhabitants of hell is about procrastination." And it is said to (the procrastinating repenter): "Why doth thou put off repentance today? If thou sayest: 'Until tomorrow, and that abandoning the appetites is difficult,' it will be the same tomorrow. For, God Most High has not created a day in which the abandonment of the carnal appetite is easy. Thou art like the person to whom they say: 'Dig out this tree from its roots.' He says: 'The tree is strong and I am weak. I'll wait until next year.' They say: 'Look at this fool! Next year the tree will be stronger and thou wilt be weaker.'" The tree of carnal appetite, too, gains strength day by day as thou cooperatest

¹⁴²⁵ In Chapter 10 of the Third Pillar.

¹⁴²⁶ "become real": literally, "become cash."

¹⁴²⁷ "unbelieving" (*bī-dīn*): lit. "without religion." The Persian word can also mean "impious, irreligious, heretical, unbelieving (non-Muslim)," etc. Since Ghazzali has already made several disparaging references Jewish and Christian doctors, one may suppose that this is his intent.

with it and thou daily becomest more incapable of opposing it. The sooner thou startest, the easier (it will be).

As for the believer who holds that: "I am a believer and God Most High will forgive the believers," we say: "It may be that He will not forgive thee. As thou hast no acts of devotion, the tree of faith is weakening and at the time of death will be uprooted in the violent storms of the agonies of death. For, faith is a tree that is watered by devotion (to God). When it has not derived strength from that, it is endangered. Indeed, faith without devotion and with many sins is like the man who is sick with many ailments. At every moment, there is the fear that he will die.

Then, if (the believer) carries his faith safely (through the trials of death), it is possible that He will forgive him. It is also possible that He will punish him. The prevailing (view) is that all the messengers, peace be upon them, were sent in order to say that sinning is the cause of punishment. Sitting (complacently) in this expectation (of forgiveness because one is a believer) is folly. He is like the person who loses all that he possesses, leaves his family hungry, and says: "Perhaps they will go to a ruin and find a treasure." Or, the city is being looted and he does not hide his goods and puts them back in his house. He says: "Perhaps this tyrant will die when he reaches my house, or neglect to enter my house." All of these are possible, and the hope for forgiveness is the same, but relying upon this and refraining from caution is folly.

EXCURSUS: [WHETHER REPENTANCE FROM SOME SINS
IS CORRECT OR NOT]¹⁴²⁸

Know that there is a difference of opinion concerning the person who has repented for some of his sins, but not all of them. Is this repentance valid or not? Some have said: "It is absurd for a person to repent for committing adultery and not for drinking wine, for if he does so because one is a sin, so is the other; just as it is absurd for him to repent for drinking one (kind of) wine and not another (kind of) wine. Both are equal and the sins are just the same."

The correct view is that such repentance is possible, for it may happen that one think adultery more serious than winebibbing and repent for the more serious (sin). Or, one may think that drinking wine is more serious than adultery because it is involved in adultery and other things as well. Or perhaps, for example, one repents for slandering, but not for drinking wine, saying that the former is related to (other) people and is, therefore, more serious. Indeed, it is permissible to repent for excessive drinking of wine, but not for drinking wine itself, saying: "The more thou

¹⁴²⁸ From the AA text.

drinkest, the greater is the punishment” and I cannot in fact overcome the appetite itself, but I can overcome the excessiveness. There is no rule that since Satan has made me helpless in something that I must be in accord with him in that which I am not helpless.”

All of these are possible, but from that which has come down: *“The repentant is the beloved of God,”* and what is said in the Quran: *Truly, God loves those who turn to him (in repentance) and He loves those who purify themselves,* (Q. 2:222) it would appear that this love is for those persons who repent of all their sins. He who says that repentance for some sins (only) is not correct is perhaps referring to (the above verse). Otherwise, the atonement for every venial sin for which one repents becomes its repentance, and it is as though it had not been committed. Repentance at one time for all sins is difficult. More often, it is done gradually and one receives spiritual reward in the amount in which it becomes possible (to repent). *And God is the Best Knower of what is correct.*

CHAPTER TWO: CONCERNING PATIENCE AND GRATITUDE

Know that repentance does not come without patience; indeed, no performance of any act of devotion, nor the abstention from any sin, comes without patience. It was for this that the Messenger (S) was asked: "What is faith?" He replied: "Patience."¹⁴²⁹ In another Tradition, he said: "Patience is one half of faith." It is because of the importance of patience that God Most High has mentioned "patience" more than seventy times in the Quran.¹⁴³⁰ Every degree which is superior (to a previous one) has been conferred with patience. Even leadership in the way of religion has been conferred with patience. And He said: *And We made from amongst them leaders, guiding by Our command, and they endured patiently and they had firm faith in Our signs.* (Q. 32:24) He delivered to them a limitless and uncountable reward with patience, and He said: *surely, the patient will be paid their wages without reckoning.* (Q. 39:10) He promised the patient that He is with them when He said: *Surely God is with the patient.* (Q. 2:153) Blessings, mercy, and guidance: these three have not come together except for the patient: He said: *Upon them are blessings from their Lord, and mercy, and they are rightly guided.* (Q. 2:157)

It is because of the importance of the virtue of patient that God Most High valued it and did not bestow it upon every person, except for a few of His Own friends, for the Messenger (S) said: *"The least of that which has been brought to you is certainty and firm intention of patience."* He said: "The least of the things which have been given you are certainty and patience. And to whomever these two have been given say: 'Have no fear if one does not have much formal prayer and fasting. If ye be patient and do not alter that which ye hold today with the Companions, I prefer that to the performance by each one of you the acts of devotion of all of you (added) together. But I fear that the way of the world be spread open to you so that after me, ye will deny one another. The inhabitants of the heavens will deny you. Whoever is steadfast and keeps his eye on spiritual reward will obtain that spiritual reward completely. Be patient, for the world does not endure, but the spiritual

¹⁴²⁹ "Patience" (*sabr*): this is the usual rendering of *sabr*, but one should think more of the patience of Job—the endurance of suffering and privation, steadfastness without complaint—rather than the aspect of waiting and expectation that modern usage of the English word conveys. Perhaps "patient endurance" better conveys the meaning. Among the definitions given by Steingass under the heading *sabr*, the following are pertinent: "being patient, waiting patiently: patience, toleration, endurance; resignation..."

¹⁴³⁰ In its various verbal and nominative permutations, it is actually mentioned close to ninety times in the Quran. (Baqi)

reward of God Most High does: *That which is with you comes to an end, but that which is with God endures; and surely We shall compensate those who were patient according to the best of what they did.* (Q. 16:96)

And the Messenger (S) said: "Patience is a treasure of the treasures of Paradise." And he said: "If patience were a man, he would be a generous man and God Most High loves the patient." Revelation came to David (A): "Follow my example in character, and one of the qualities of my character is that I am very patient." Jesus (A) said: "Ye shall not obtain that which ye desire so long as ye are not patient with that which ye do not desire." The Messenger (S) saw a group of the Helpers. He asked: "Are ye believers?" They replied: "Yes." He asked: "What is the sign of your faith?" They said: "We give thanks in ease and are patient in adversity and we are pleased with the decree of God." He said: "*By the Lord of the Ka'bah, ye are believers!*" 'Ali (R) said: "Patience is to faith as the head is to the body. Whoever does not have a head, does not have a body; whoever does not have patience, does not have faith."

THE TRUE NATURE OF PATIENCE

Know that patience is a human trait; brutish beasts do not have patience and are very deficient. Angels have no need of patience, for they are the extremity of perfection and free from appetite. Thus, beasts are subjugated by appetite alone. They have no importuner other than appetite, while the angels are immersed in the love of the Divine Presence. There is no obstacle for them to be patient in the overcoming of it.

Moreover, at first, a human being is created in the character of the beasts, and the craving for food, clothing, decoration, amusement, and play have been made dominant over him. Then, at the time of puberty, a light from the angelic lights appears in him and he sees the results of affairs in that light. Indeed, two angels have been appointed over him, of which the beasts are deprived. One angel guides him and shows him the way by means of a light which spreads to him from the lights of the angel so that he recognizes the end of affairs and sees the prudence of affairs, until he comes to know himself and God Most High by that light. He understands that the end result of the appetites is total destruction, even if there be delight for the moment. He understands that his pleasure and ease are quickly transitory, while his sorrow will be long lasting. This guidance is not for the beasts.

However, this guidance is not sufficient, for if one learns that (something) causes loss and that one does not possess the power to ward it off, what is the benefit? A sick person knows that the disease is harmful to him, but he is unable to repulse it. Therefore, God, may He be

praised, has appointed the other angel over him to give him strength and power and to support and direct him so that he will refrain from that which he has learned is harmful to him. As it is his need that he control his lusts, something else must appear in him to oppose that in order to escape harm in the future. This compulsion¹⁴³¹ for opposition is that of the angelic hosts, while the compulsion to give rein to the appetites is that of the demonic hosts. This compulsion to oppose the carnal appetite is what we call the "religious impulse," and the compulsion to give rein to the carnal appetites we call the "carnal impulse."

As a result, there is continuous warfare and opposition between these two armies. One says: "Do it!" while the other says: "Do it not!" One remains continually between these two importuning (forces). If the religious impulse is dug in firmly in the battle with the carnal impulse and is steadfast, its steadfastness) is called "patience." Therefore, that is the meaning of patience. If it overcomes the carnal impulse and repulses it, its triumph is called "victory." While the battle continues in him, this is called "the earnest striving against the self." So, the meaning of patience is the remaining firm of the religious impulse in opposition against the carnal impulse. Wherever these two opposing armies are not present, there is no patience. This is because there is no need of patience for the angels, while beasts and children do not themselves have the power of patience.

Know that these two angels whom we have mentioned are their Recording Angels.¹⁴³² To whomever the way of opinion and ratiocination has been opened, he knows that for every occurrence there is a cause. When two things are in opposition, two opposing causes are need. He sees that for a beast or a child there is at first no guidance and no insight to understand the consequences of acts. (A child) does not have the motivation or the strength to be patient, but when approaching puberty, both appear (in him). He knows that two causes are needed for this and those two angels are the expressions of those two causes. He also knows that guidance is the source and its precursor. Then power and will work with it.

Consequently, that angel whose brief is guidance is nobler and superior, so that the right-hand side of the breast is certain for him. Thou art the breast; they are thy guardians. Therefore, he is the angel of the right hand. Since he is charged with thee, when thou listen to him in order to obtain guidance and spiritual insight, thy hearkening is (counted

¹⁴³¹ "compulsion" (*bāyist*): The Persian word *bāyist* is a verbal form meaning "it is necessary; it behooves." Here it is used nominally. The equivalent passage in the Arabic *The Revival* uses the word *hirs*, "avidity, greed, craving." *Bāyist* is a stronger word and "compulsion" is used because it is stronger, and also to differentiate it from other forms of craving for which other words are commonly used.

¹⁴³² "Recording Angels": *Kirāmūl-Kātibīn*.

as) a good deed that thou hast performed. It is recorded as one of thy good deeds because thou hast not left (the angel of the right hand) neglected. And if thou turnest away and neglect him so that thou remain like children and beasts, deprived of the guidance as to consequences, this is an evil deed which thou will have committed with respect to (that angel) and to thyself, and it will be recorded against thy. In the same way, if thou utilizest that strength which thou hast obtained from the other for opposing the carnal appetites and strive earnestly, that is a good deed. If thou doth not, it is a bad deed. Both inscribe these states in thy ledgers. Though they are inside thy soul, they are hidden from thy soul.

These two angels and their ledgers are not of this visible world, nor can they be seen with the eye (of this world). When death comes and the eyes of this visible (world) are closed, another eye by which one can see the angelic world opens and one sees these ledgers at hand and thou mayest see them. At the Lesser Resurrection, thou wilt be informed about that. As for its exposition, thou wilt see that in the Greater Resurrection. The Lesser Resurrection is at the time of death, as the Messenger (S) said: "*His Resurrection is ready for whoever dies.*" Whatever is in the Greater Resurrection is foreshadowed in the Lesser Resurrection. We have discussed the details of this in *The Revival*; it would exceed the capacity of this book.

The point is that thou know that patience is a battlefield, and a battlefield is a place where there are two opposing armies. These two armies—one is the angelic cavalry and the other is the demonic cavalry—are gathered in the human breast. Therefore, the first step in the way of religion is involving oneself in this battle, for the demonic hosts have seized the field of the breast in childhood, and the angelic hosts have appeared at the approach of puberty. Consequently, so long as one has not triumphed over the carnal appetite, one will not achieve his (spiritual) happiness. So long as one does not fight and is not steadfast in battle, one will not prevail. Whoever does not involve himself in this war is he who has surrendered his guardianship to Satan. And whoever has controlled his appetite and made it obedient to the Law has prevailed over it, is as the Messenger (S) said: "*God aided me in the battle with Satan so that he surrendered to me.*" Usually one is engaged in earnest struggle. One time there is victory, another time rout; one time appetite prevails, and another time the religious impulse. That fortress will not be conquered save with patience and steadfastness.

DISCLOSING WHY PATIENCE IS ONE HALF OF FAITH AND WHY FASTING IS ONE HALF OF PATIENCE

Know that faith is not (just) one thing. Rather, it has many branches and kinds. As it is related in the Traditions, there are seventy-

odd gateways to faith. The greatest of these is the declaration: *There is no god save God*, and the least is picking up trash from the road. No matter how many of these types there are, their sources are of three types: various kinds of (spiritual) knowledge, states, and deeds. No station of the stations of faith is devoid of these three.

For example, the true nature of repentance is remorse and this is a state of the soul. Its source is the knowledge that sin is a lethal poison. The corollary of this is that one should restrain one's hand from sinning and become occupied with devotion. Thus, that state and this knowledge and these acts (of restraint and devotion), all three, are parts of faith and faith consists of these three. But, it may be that it is only credited to (spiritual) knowledge, because the source of this is that state which appears from knowledge; and from that state deeds are born. So, (spiritual) knowledge is like a tree, the alteration of the states of the soul due to knowledge are like the branches of the tree, and the deeds which are born from those states are like the fruit of the tree.

Thus, the totality of faith is two things: perception and behavior, and behavior without patience is not possible. Consequently, patience is half of faith. One must be patient in two things: one is of the nature of appetite and the other is of the nature of anger. Fasting is patience with the nature of appetite, so it is one half of patience. When thou lookest at it from another aspect, all is involved with behavior, and thou construest faith with that. The behavior of the believer in affliction is patience and in ease, it is gratitude. From this point of view, patience is one half of faith, and gratitude is one half of faith, as it is related in the Traditions. When thou lookest at that which is more difficult and harder, thou takest that as the basis. There is nothing more difficult than patience. From this aspect, patience is the totality of faith. As (the Messenger) was asked: "What is faith?" He replied: "Patience." That is, it is the most difficult. As he said: "The Greater Pilgrimage is 'Arafah."¹⁴³³ That is, because of the awesomeness of the spiritual reward for doing that. By missing ('Arafah), one misses (the spiritual reward) of the Pilgrimage, but it is not lost by missing other rites (of the Pilgrimage).

DISCLOSING THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENCE AT ALL TIMES

Know that at all times the servant (of God) is not devoid of things that are in agreement with his desire, or in opposition to it. In both circumstances, patience is a necessity:

¹⁴³³ "'Arafah": The patient standing on the Plain of 'Arafah to demonstrate one's attendance and readiness to fulfill the commands of God Most High. It is the climax of the Pilgrimage.

AS FOR THAT WHICH IS IN AGREEMENT with one's desire, such as wealth, comfort, rank, bodily health, wife, children according to his wish, and the likes of these, steadfastness and patience is never more important than in these circumstances. For, if one does not take hold of himself and he exceeds the limits in ease and comfort and sets his heart upon them and becomes attached to them, hubris and tyranny are born in him. Indeed, it has been said that everyone is patient in adversity, but not in well-being—except the truly righteous person. When wealth and comfort became abundant in the time of the Companions, they said: "We were better able to be steadfast the time when we endured hardships than we are now when we are in comfort and wealth." About this God Most High said: *[And know] that your possessions and your children are a test.* (Q. 8:28)

In short, being steadfastly patient in prosperity is difficult. The greatest defence against that is not being prosperous. Patience in ease is that one does not set one's heart upon it or rejoice excessively because of it. He knows that is a loan and that it will soon be taken back. Indeed, one does not consider it itself to be comfort, for it itself is the cause of a loss of his degrees at the Resurrection. Therefore, he must engage himself in expressing gratitude for (those blessings) that God Most High gives of wealth and bodily health, and for every blessing that he has. In every one of these, patience is necessary.

AS FOR THOSE CONDITIONS that were are not in agreement with his desire, they are of three kinds: one is that which is of his choosing, such as devotion and the abandonment of sin; another is that which is not of his choosing, such as calamity and tragedy; and the other is that which is not originally of his choosing, but for which he has a choice in fending off or exacting retribution, such as in the annoyance of people.

As for that which is of one's choosing, such as acts of devotion, patience is a necessity in that, as some acts of worship are difficult because they are tiring, such as formal prayer. Some are (difficult) because of stinginess, such as paying the poor rate. Some are from both—such as the Greater Pilgrimage—which are not possible (of fulfillment) without steadfast patience. In every act of devotion, patience is a necessity: at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. As for the beginning, one acquires sincerity in the declaration of the Intention, keeps it firm, and banishes hypocrisy from the soul. This is a difficult kind of steadfastness. Another is that one remain steadfast during (the performance of the act of devotion) according to its conditions and rules so that it not be tainted with any other thing. If it is to be during formal prayer, one should not look about or harbor any worldly thoughts. As for the end of the act of worship, one must be patient about disclosing what

one has done and talking about it, and one must be steadfast with respect to vanity about that.

AS FOR SINS, there is no doubt but that abstention from them is not possible without patience. However much the appetite is stronger, the sinning is easier. It is for this reason that patience with respect to the sins of the tongue is more difficult, for the tongue is brought into action more easily. When talkativeness becomes a habit, the habit becomes nature. One of the armies of Satan is habit and it is because of this that tongue is fluent in slander, lies, self-praise, the defamation of others, and the like. There is a great suffering in being patient about uttering the words that will astonish and please people. For the most part, one cannot keep oneself from being involved, except by seeking safety in seclusion.

AS FOR THE SECOND KIND, it is that which is not of one's choosing, such as people's annoying him by hand and tongue, but he has a choice with regard to retaliation. It has the need of perfect patience to refrain from retaliation, or to keep oneself within proper limits when retaliating. One of the Companions says: "We did not count belief as belief so long as it was not accompanied by patience in (the face of) the vexations caused by others." It was for this that God Most High said to the Messenger (S): "Let them torment thee and trust in Me": *Heed not their hurt and put thy trust in God.* (Q. 33:48) He said: "Be patient with what they say and cut (thyself) off from them courteously": *And bear with patience what they utter and part from them with a fair leaving.* (Q. 73:10) And He said: "I know that thou art distressed by the words of thine enemies, but busy thyself with (My) glorification: *Indeed We know that thy bosom is straitened by that which they say; but proclaim thy Lord's praise and be one of those who prostrate themselves.* (Q. 15:97-98)

Once the Messenger (S) was distributing goods. Someone said: "This is not for God"; that is, it was not just. The Messenger (S) was informed about this. He turned red and became upset, and then said: "May God have mercy upon my brother Moses (A) for he was troubled even more and remained patient for the sake of God." And he said: "God Most High says: 'If ye are punished and ye retaliate, ye have done several times (worse). If ye are patient, it would be better: *If ye punish, then punish with the like of that wherewith ye were afflicted, but if ye endure patiently; truly, it is better for the patient.* (Q. 16:126) And I saw written in the Gospel that Jesus (A) said: "The people who have come before me said: 'Cut off a hand for a hand, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' and I do not nullify that, but I counsel you that ye not meet evil with evil. Rather, if someone strikes the right side of your face, present

the left side. If a person takes your sash, give him your tunic. If someone takes you with himself a mile by force, go with him two miles."¹⁴³⁴ And the Messenger (S) said: "Give to whoever deprives you (of something). Do good to whoever does evil to you." Such patience belongs to the degree of truly righteous.

AS FOR THE THIRD KIND, which is that its beginning and the end are not dependent upon thy will, it is tragedy, such as the death of a child, or financial ruin, the ruin of body parts such as the eyes, ears, hands, and all other heaven-sent calamities, there is no patience more spiritually rewarding than that concerned with (these).

Ibn 'Abbas says: "In the Quran there are three degrees of patience: steadfast patience in devotion increases devotion by three-hundred degrees; then, there are six-hundred degrees for steadfast patience in refraining from that which is forbidden; and third, steadfast patience in refraining from sin at the beginning of a sin, and there are nine-hundred degrees for that." And know that patience in public is the degree of the truly righteous. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said in supplication: "O Lord God, bestow enough certainty upon us so that the tragedies of the world become easy for us." And the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High says: 'If I restore health to one of My servants upon whom I send an affliction and who is patient and does not complain, I shall return a better flesh and skin to him. Or, if I carry him off to My Own mercy, I shall do so.'"

David (A) said: "O Lord God, what is the recompense for him who endures patiently tragedy for Thy sake?" (God) answered: "I shall clothe him in the honored Robe of Faith and never take it back from him." And he said that God Most High says: "I would be ashamed to take a reckoning and send to the Scales (of Divine Justice) or the Tribunal him upon whom I have sent a calamity to his body, or property, or children, and who met it with a beautiful patience."

And the Messenger (S) said: "Waiting patiently for a pleasure¹⁴³⁵ is an act of worship." And he said: "Whoever is afflicted by tragedy should say: '*Verily we belong to God and to Him we shall return*,'¹⁴³⁶ O God, reward me in my calamity and follow it with goodness from it for me.' God Most High will answer this his supplication." He said: "God

¹⁴³⁴ Compare: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill them." (Matthew 5:17) "Ye have heard it was said that: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would sue thee and take away thy coat, give him thy cloak also; and if anyone forces you to go with him for one mile, go with him for two miles." (Matthew 5:38-41)

¹⁴³⁵ "a pleasure" (*faraj*): the word often has the connotation of sexual pleasure.

¹⁴³⁶ Q. 2:156.

Most High asked: 'Dost thou know what the reward for a person is whose sight I have taken? That I favor him with his seeing Me.'

One of the saints had written these words upon a piece of paper: "*Be patient for the judgment of thy Lord; thou art before Our Eyes.*" Whenever some sorrow would touch him, he would take that piece of paper out of his pocket and read it. The wife of Fath Mawsili¹⁴³⁷ fell and broke her fingernail. She laughed. They asked her: "Didst thou not hurt thyself?" She replied: "The joy for the spiritual reward (of the affliction) made me heedless of feeling the pain." And the Messenger (S) said: "One of the (ways of) honoring God Most High is that thou not complain in sickness and that thou conceal thy calamities." Someone says: "I saw Salim,¹⁴³⁸ the client of Abu Hudhayfah, wounded and fallen in battle. I said: 'Dost thou want water?' He said: 'Take my foot and pull me nearer to the enemy. Put water in a pail, for I am fasting. If I survive until nightfall, I shall drink it.'"¹⁴³⁹

Because of one's weeping or sadness, the virtue of patience is not lost. Instead, it is lost by one's loud wailing, rending of garments, and excessive complaining; for the Messenger (S) wept when his son Ibrahim received the command.¹⁴⁴⁰ They said: "Didst thou not forbid this (weeping)?" He answered: "No, for this is a mercy. God Most High has mercy upon a person because He is Merciful." It has been said that the beautiful patience is that the afflicted one be not distinguished among others by his rending of clothing, slapping his face, and wailing loudly. All of these are forbidden. Indeed, altering one's states, putting one's pants over one's head, shortening one's turban—all of these are improper. Rather, one should know that a servant (of God) is created without thee and is taken back without thee.

As Rumaysa, the mother of Salim and the wife of Abu Talhah,¹⁴⁴¹ said: "My husband was absent and one of our sons (died). I clothed him. When (my husband) returned, he asked: 'How is the sick (boy)?' I answered: 'He has not been better than he is tonight.' Then I brought food and he had his fill. That night, I dressed myself more attractively than usual so that he lay with me¹⁴⁴² and afterward we performed the greater purification. Then, I said: 'I lent something to such-and-such a neighbor. When I asked for it back, he shouted and cried out and became upset.' (My husband) said: 'That is odd! A very foolish

¹⁴³⁷ The wife of Fath Mawsili: No other information about her from available standard sources at present. See Note 843 on Fath Mawsili.

¹⁴³⁸ Salim: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁴³⁹ That is, as he was fasting, though wounded, he would not drink water until the sun set (the time of breaking the fast)—if he survived that long.

¹⁴⁴⁰ "received the command": that is, died.

¹⁴⁴¹ Rumaysā, the mother of Salim and the wife of Abu Talhah: No other information about her from available standard sources at present.

¹⁴⁴² "so that he lay with me": literally, "he gratified his need of me."

neighbor!' Then, I said: 'Our little boy was on loan from God Most High. He asked for his return and took him away.' He said: '*Verily we belong to God and to Him shall we return.*' (Q. 2:156) The next morning, he told the Messenger what had taken place the night before. (The Messenger) said: 'May God Most High bless last night for thee, for it was a great night.' Then the Messenger (S) said: 'I entered heaven on the evening of the Night Journey and I saw Rumaysa, the wife of Abu Talhah.'"

So, from all of this, thou hast learned that the servant of God is at no time without need of patience. Indeed, if one achieves freedom from all appetites and goes into seclusion, in seclusion a hundred thousand temptations and various speculations raise their heads from within one that divert one from the remembrance of God Most High. Even though they be about permitted things, such as the time one has lost, that one's life is one's capital; it has resulted in a total loss. The remedy for this is that one keep oneself busy in continual praises, commemorations, and recitations. And, if one is the same¹⁴⁴³ in performing formal prayer, one should increase one's effort and not leave off except for some work that settles one's heart. It is related in the Traditions: "God Most High is inimical to the idle youth." He said this for the reason that when a young person sits at leisure, his companion may be the temptations of Satan and his soul a nest of wicked thoughts. One is not able to dispel them except by the remembrance of God Most High. He must be busy with some craft, or with a service, or some work that will occupy him. It is not suitable that such a person sit alone. Instead, whoever is unable to do the work of the soul must keep his body busy.

DISCLOSING THE TREATMENT FOR PATIENCE

As the kinds of patience are not one, being patiently steadfast for each (kind) has a different difficulty and a different treatment, notwithstanding that all treatment is a compound of knowledge and practice. What we have said in the *Pillar of Destroyers*¹⁴⁴⁴ is all the medicine for patience. Here we shall expound upon one of them by way of example so that it will be a pattern by which the others may be known analogously.

As we have said, the meaning of patience is the firmness of the religious impulse as opposed to the carnal impulse and there is a kind of war between these two impulses. The plan of whoever sets two people at war with each other and wants one of them to win is to strengthen and aid that one which is supposed to triumph, and to weaken and deprive the

¹⁴⁴³ "the same": that is, diverted from the concentration necessary for meaningful prayer.

¹⁴⁴⁴ The Third Pillar of this work.

other of aid. Now, when a person is overcome by the craving for sexual intercourse and cannot restrain his genitals—even if he would want to, he cannot keep his eye from looking and his soul from thinking, and he is unable to be patiently steadfast (against it). The remedy for that is first we weaken the carnal motivation, and that is done with three things:

We know that aid for (that craving) comes from good nourishment and food; so we withhold this aid and command fasting so that at night he eats dry bread and he eats little. Of course, he does not eat meat and delicious foods.

Another way is that we shut off that from which the sexual excitement comes. Its excitement is from looking at beautiful visages. He must go into seclusion and restrain his eyes and leave the passing places of women and youths.¹⁴⁴⁵

The third is that he quiet (the impulse) with the lawful so that he escapes forbidden passion: he marries so that the carnal appetite becomes quieted. Usually, these lusts cannot be relieved without marriage.

The similitude of this animal soul is the stubborn beast of burden which we satisfy by first withholding its fodder until it is tamed. Another is that we remove the fodder from before it so that it does not see it. Another is that we give it that amount which calms it down. Each of these three treatments is the same for the appetite. It is the weakening of the appetite. However, strengthening the religious motivation is done by two things:

One is that thou whet his avidity for the benefit of wrestling with his appetite by his reflecting upon the Traditions that have come down concerning the spiritual reward for a person who is steadfast and patient. When (his) faith becomes stronger by the fact that the profit of carnal appetite will be for an hour while the profit of steadfast resistance to it will be eternal kingship, the religious motivation gains strength according to the strength of this faith.

The other is that he is made habituated to opposing the appetite little by little until he becomes bold, for when a person desires to become strong, he must test his strength and perform acts of strength. Little by little and bit by bit, he goes farther. A person who wants to wrestle with a strong man must first wrestle with persons who are weaker and test his strength with them to increase (his own) strength. It is for this that the strength of people who do hard work is greater. The treatment for obtaining patience in all affairs is this.

¹⁴⁴⁵“Women and youths”: literally, “women and children (*kūdakān*).” In such a context, this usually refers to young teenagers.

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE OF GRATITUDE AND ITS TRUE NATURE

Know that gratitude is a great station and a high degree, but not everyone attains its truth. It is for this that God Most High said: *Few of My servants are thankful.* (Q. 34:13) Iblis sneered at Adam, and said (to God): *"Thou wilt not find most of them grateful (unto Thee)."* (Q. 7:17) Most of them will not be grateful.

Know that the attributes we have called "the Deliverers" are of two kinds: One is in the preliminaries of the way of religion and is not in itself an objective, such as repentance, patience, fear, asceticism, and preventing public immorality. These are all means to another end, which is the way of religion. The second kind is the objectives and ends, such as love, zeal, satisfaction, the Unity (of God), and trust. Gratitude is among these. Whatever is the object remains in the Hereafter. As He said: *And the conclusion of their supplication shall be: Praise be to God the Lord of the worlds.* (Q. 10:10) Thus, it became necessary that it ought to be discussed at the end of the book, but because gratitude is related to patience, it is being discussed here.

The sign of greatness of its degree is that God Most High has made it the companion of His Own remembrance, saying: *Therefore remember Me, I shall remember you. Give thanks to Me, and reject Me not.* (Q. 2:152) And the Messenger (S) said: "The degree of the person who eats food and is grateful is the degree of the one who fasts and is patient." And he said: "On the Day of Resurrection it will be called out: *'Where are the praisers?'*" No one will stand up except the one who has expressed gratitude to God Most High in all circumstances." When the verse was revealed about the prohibition of the laying up of treasure, 'Umar (R) said: "O Messenger of God, then what should we accumulate of wealth?" (The Messenger) answered: "A tongue remembering (God), a grateful soul, a patient body, and a believing wife." That is, be content with these things of the world, for a believing wife is a companion in leisure from which remembrance (of God), gratitude, and patience result.

Ibn Mas'ud says: "Gratitude is one half of faith." 'Ata says: "I was with 'Ayishah and I asked her to relate some of the wonders of the states of the Messenger (S) to me. She said: 'Which of his states was not wonderful? One night he came to me in sleeping clothes so that his naked body touched my body. Then he said: 'O 'Ayishah, let me go and worship God.' I said: 'I want to be close to thee, but go.' He arose and took some water from the water skin and purified himself and poured out a little water. Then he stood up and performed formal prayer, weeping copiously, until Bilal came to go to the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer. I said: 'God Most High has forgiven all of thy sins; why dost thou weep?' He said: 'Then, I would not be a grateful servant. Why should I not weep while this verse was being revealed to me? *Lo! In the*

creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens for the understanding, such as remember God standing, sitting, and reclining. (Q. 3:190-191)

That is, those who possess understanding lying down, sitting, and standing busy themselves with the remembrance (of God) and contemplate the wonders of the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth weep in gratitude at the degree which they have obtained, from joy, not from fear. As it is related: "One of the messengers passed by a small rock from which abundant waters were flowing forth. God Most High gave it the power of speech and it said: 'Since this verse had been revealed: *Its fuel is of men and stones*, (Q. 2:24)¹⁴⁴⁶ — men and stones will be the fuel of hell—I have been weeping like this.' (That messenger) said: 'O Lord God, turn this fear into faith,' and this supplication was fulfilled. Another time, he passed by that stone, and it was still pouring forth abundant water. He asked: 'Now, why art thou weeping?' (The stone) answered: 'That weeping was from fear; this weeping is from joy.'" And this is a parable for the human soul which is harder than stone. It must weep, sometimes from sorrow and sometimes from joy, so that it may become soft.

THE TRUE NATURE OF GRATITUDE

Know that we have said that the stations of religion come with three fundamentals: knowledge, state, and deed. Knowledge is the basis, and from it, state arises; and action arises from state. Just as the knowledge of gratitude is the recognition of the blessings of God, the state is the joy of the soul for that blessing, and action is the employment of those blessings for that which is the desideratum of God. That action is both connected with the soul, with the tongue, and with the body. So long as all of this is not clear, the true nature of gratitude will not be clear.

AS FOR KNOWLEDGE (of gratitude), it is that thou recognize that every blessing thou possessest is from God, may He be praised and exalted! No one is His partner in this. So long as thou seest anyone in the midst of causes and thou lookest at him and see things as (originating) from him, (thy) knowledge of gratitude (to God) is not perfect. For, when a king bestows a robe of honor upon thee, but thou knowest that it was through the favor of a minister, thy gratitude to the king will not be unalloyed. Indeed, some of it will be to the minister. Thy joy will not all be in the king. Instead, some of it will be for the minister.

¹⁴⁴⁶ This is a phrase from the verse. The full text is: *And if ye do it not (produce a chapter like a Quranic chapter) and ye can never do it - then guard yourselves against the fire prepared for the disbelievers, whose fuel is of men and stones. (Q. 2:24)*

However, if thou knowest that the robe of honor comes to thee by the king's patent, and the signature is made with pen and paper, this does not bring a diminishment (of gratitude to the king), because thou knowest that the pen and paper are utilized and that they had no control over anything. Indeed, if the treasurer also delivered it to thee, there is no loss (of gratitude to the king), because thou knowest that he had no part in it, that he was utilized (as the means of delivery). He cannot oppose what has been commanded (by the king). If he had not been commanded (to do so), he would not have delivered it. He is utilized, just as is the pen. In the same way, if thou perceivest the blessings upon the earth as from the rain, and thou perceivest the rain as from a cloud, and thou perceiveest the salvation of a ship as from a steady wind, thine expression of gratitude for that is not complete. But, when thou learnest that the clouds, the rain, the wind, the sun, the moon, the stars, and everything that is—all are in the grasp of the power of God subjugated in the same manner that a pen is (subjugated) in the hand of a scribe, where the pen has absolutely no power of discretion, this (knowledge) does not bring any diminishment in gratitude (to God).

If a blessing reaches thee that a human being gives thee and thou thinkest it is from him, this is ignorance and a veil (hiding) the station of gratitude. Thou shouldst know, rather, that he gave thee that because God Most High sent him an agent that compelled him to decide to do that. However much he would have wanted to oppose that agent, he would be unable to do so. If he had been able to, he would not have given thee a single grain. The agent is that motive that fell into his heart and kept it before him: "Thy welfare in religion and the world lies in that thou give it to him," so that he, eager to achieve his own aim in this world and the next, gave it to thee. In reality, he gave it to himself, for he made it a means for his own end; but God Most High gave it to thee because He sent him such an agent. God does not have any desire in exchange for that.

Thus, when thou truly recognizeest that all men are like the king's treasurer, and the treasurer is like the pen—nothing is in the power of anyone save that which they are commanded to do—then thou can be grateful for these blessings to God Most High. Indeed, this spiritual insight itself is the essence of gratitude. As Moses (A) said in conversation with God: "O my God! Thou didst create Adam with Thine Own Hand of Power and Thou didst do such-and-such with him. How did he thank Thee?" (God) said: "He knew that it was from Me, and his knowing is thankfulness to Me."

And know that the divisions of the kinds of spiritual knowledge of faith are many: The first is sanctification, that thou know that God, may He be honored and exalted, is pure and free of all attributes of created things and all that comes to thought and imagination. The

expression of this is: "*Glory be to God!*"¹⁴⁴⁷ The second is that thou know that He is in this purity unique and He has no partner. The expression of this is: "*There is no god but God!*"¹⁴⁴⁸ The third is that thou know that everything that exists, all of it, is from Him and is His blessing. The expression of this condition is: "*Praise be to God!*"¹⁴⁴⁹ This is beyond both of the other two because both kinds of those kinds of spiritual knowledge appear beneath it. It was for this that the Messenger (S) said: "*Glory be to God!*" is ten good deeds, "*There is no god but God!*" is twenty good deeds, and "*Praise be to God!*" is thirty good deeds." Those good deeds are not the movements of the tongue with those words. Rather, those good deeds are the spiritual insights appearing in the soul that those words express. This is the meaning of the knowledge of gratitude.

AS FOR THE STATE OF GRATITUDE, it is the joy that appears in the soul from this spiritual knowledge. For everyone who sees a blessing from someone rejoices in that. However, this joy may have three aspects:

ONE is that if a king will go on a journey, he gives one of his own horses to a servant. If that servant becomes happy, it is because he was in need of a horse and he has gotten it. This is not gratitude to the king, for (the servant) would have become just as happy had he found the horse in the desert.

ANOTHER is the joy that comes from recognizing the favor of the king with respect to him and he starts to hope for further favors. This joy is (linked) to the benefactor, but is not for the benefactor. Instead, it is because of the expectation of (more) favors. This is counted as gratitude, but it is lacking.

THE THIRD DEGREE is the joy that comes because he is able to sit upon the horse and go in attendance on the king so that he may see (the king). He wants nothing more from him except this. This is joy in the king, and it is the entirety of gratitude.

It is the same for a person to whom God has given some blessing and is gladdened by that blessing, not by the Benefactor. This is not gratitude. If he were delighted with the Benefactor—but because (the gift) was the proof of His satisfaction and favor—this is gratitude, but it is lacking. If it were because that blessing became the cause of leisure for religion so that he could engage in acts of worship and study, and seek proximity to His Presence, this would be the perfection of gratitude. Its

¹⁴⁴⁷ "*Glory be to God!*": *Subhāna-llāh!*

¹⁴⁴⁸ "*There is no god but God!*: *Lā ilāha illā-llāh!*

¹⁴⁴⁹ "*Praise be to God!*": *Al-ḥamdu-lillāh*

sign is that he is sorrowed by every worldly thing that distracts him from His service and from Him. Instead, he recognizes the withdrawal (of a blessing) as a blessing and gives thanks for that. Moreover, he does not take joy in anything that is not his helper in the way of religion.

It is for this that Shibli, may God have mercy upon him, said: "Gratitude is that thou dost not see the favor; thou seest the Giver of the favor." For anyone whose pleasure is nothing other than in the things perceptible to the senses—such as the carnal appetite, the eyes, and belly, and the genitalia—gratitude is not possible. Therefore, there is nothing lower than the second degree, for the first degree is not counted as gratitude.

AS FOR THE ACT OF GRATITUDE, it is with the soul, the tongue, and the body:

AS FOR THE SOUL, it is that one wish well for all mankind and not envy anyone for his blessings.

AS FOR THE TONGUE, it is that it one be modest and utter: "Praise be to God!" often and that it express to the Benefactor joy for blessings in all circumstances. The Messenger (S) asked someone: "How art thou?" He replied: "Fine." (The Messenger) asked (again): "How art thou?" (The man) replied: "Fine, praise be to God!" (The Messenger) said: "That was what I was seeking." The desire of the forefathers who used to ask each other how they were was that the answer be (an expression of) gratitude. Both the speaker and questioner share in the spiritual reward (of that exchange). Whoever complains becomes an offender, even if he is in affliction. What is more unbecoming than that one complain of the Lord of the seven heavens and the seven climes to an unfortunate person who does not have the power to do anything? Instead, one should give thanks for the affliction because it may happen that that affliction will be the cause of one's (spiritual) happiness, if one is able to be patient a while.

AS FOR THE BODY, it is that each member is a blessing for one. Thou shouldst employ (the body) for that which it was created, and all were created for the Hereafter. What He desires from thee is that thou occupy thyself with that. When thou hast used His blessings for His desired end, thou hast shown gratitude even though there is no part or portion for Him in that. For He is above such needs. The parable of this is the king who favors a slave and that slave is far away from him. He sends a horse and the provisions for the journey so that (the slave) may come to him and, because of proximity to (the royal) presence, become great and achieve a high rank. For the king, his proximity or remoteness

with respect to himself are both the same, for in his kingdom nothing is increased or reduced by (the slave), but he desires the good for the slave. For, when the king is generous, he desires good fortune for his people—for them, not for himself.

Therefore, if that slave mounts the horse and heads for the royal presence, and uses those provisions on the way, he has shown his gratitude for the favor of the horse and the provisions. But if he mounts the horse and turns his back on the royal presence and goes farther away, he has shown ingratitude. If he delays and goes neither closer nor farther away, this is also ingratitude, but not to the degree of the former. And it is the same when a servant of God uses the favors of God Most High in obedience to Him so that he may attain the degree of proximity to the Divine Presence. (In this), he is showing gratitude, and if he expends (the favors) in sin so that he becomes more distant, it is ingratitude. If he delays or he uses them in lawful comfort, it is also ingratitude, even though its degree is not that of the former. When it is clear that gratitude for each blessing lies in that one use it for (achieving) the desire¹⁴⁵⁰ of God Most High, no one can do this except a person whose desire it is to discriminate between the aim of God Most High and that which He dislikes. This is a complex and subtle study to which we have referred briefly in this book. If a person desires more (about it), he should seek it in *The Revival*. No more than this is possible in this book.

**DISCLOSING THAT INGRATITUDE FOR EVERY BLESSING IS THAT IT
TURN ONE AWAY FROM HIS WISDOM AND NOT BE USED IN THE
MANNER FOR WHICH IT WAS CREATED**

Know that spending a blessing of God Most High in what pleases God is gratitude, but in what He dislikes is ingratitude. What He likes and what He dislikes cannot be known except through the Religious Doctrine and Law. Therefore, it is a prerequisite that a blessing be used in devotion, as is the command. However, for the perspicacious there is a way to understand the underlying purpose¹⁴⁵¹ of affairs with pondering and reasoning, and by the way of inspiration. It is possible for a person to recognize that the underlying purpose for the creation of clouds is rain. In the creation of rain, there are plants; in the creation of plants, there is the nourishment of animals. The underlying purpose in the creation of the sun is the appearance of day and night so that night is for rest and day for livelihood.

It is clear that everyone knows these and their like, but there are many underlying purposes in the sun beyond that, which not everyone

¹⁴⁵⁰ "desire" (*maḥbūb*): in this case, the thing desired or loved. Of course, *maḥbūb* is also a term of endearment meaning "beloved."

¹⁴⁵¹ "underlying purpose" (*ḥikmat*), or "divine mystery."

can apprehend. There are numerous stars in the sky for which not everyone knows what the underlying purpose in their creation is. Just as with respect his own limbs, everyone knows that the hands are for grasping, the feet are for walking, the eyes for seeing, but he does not know what his liver or spleen is for. He does not know for what reason his eye was created in ten layers. Therefore, some of underlying purposes are subtle and others even subtler, which are understood only by specialists. A discussion of this would be lengthy.

This much is necessary, that one must know that a human being has been created for the Hereafter, not for this world. Whatever is a human being's portion in this world has been created to be his provision for (the journey) to the Hereafter. One must not suppose that everything has been created for him, lest he say about something in which he sees no benefit for himself: "Why was it created? What wisdom is there in their creation?" (Or) lest he say: "Why were flies created? Why were snakes created?" He must realize that ants are also perplexed as to why thou wast created so that thou step upon them and kill them carelessly. Its perplexity is the same as thy perplexity. Indeed, because of the perfection of the Divine munificence, it is necessary that whatever is possible to come into existence of animals, plants, minerals, etc., come into existence in the best manner of all species and types. Then, everything which each one requires appropriate to its necessity and need and for its beauty and adornment, comes into existence; for there, there is no restriction or stinting.

And the reason for anything's not coming into existence in perfection and beauty is that there is no place for its acceptance because there is some attribute working in opposition to it. It may be that in that opposition there is a purpose for some other work: for it is not possible for fire to accept the coolness and delicacy of water, because heat does not accept cold, as it is its opposite. Too, its heat is the point (of its existence). Eliminating (that quality) from it would also be a deficiency. In fact, the moisture from which He created the fly He created because the fly is more perfect than that moisture. The moisture is (potentially) capable of that perfection. (The realization of that potential) was not held back from it, for such a restriction would be stinting. (The fly) is more perfect because in it are life, power, sensation, movement, and strange shapes and organs that are not in that moisture.

He did not create a human being from (that moisture) because it did not have the basis or the (potential) capability for that. In it, there were attributes that were in opposition to the attributes which are the conditions for the creation of a human being. However, He withheld nothing that was necessary for the fly: wings,¹⁴⁵² legs,¹⁴⁵³ eyes, mouth,

¹⁴⁵² "wings" (*par wa bāl*): literally, "feathers and wings."

head, stomach, a place for food to enter, a place for food to stop and be digested, and a place for its excretion. He did not withhold anything which was necessary for its body to be small, delicate, and light. Because it needed sight and its head was small, on which lidded eyes would not be possible, He created for it two lidless beads, like two mirrors, so that images could be displayed in them and it could see. Since eyelids are for the purpose of preventing dust from settling on the eyes, (the fly) sweeps it away. When the mirror is tarnished and since it does not have eyelids, He created two extra arms by which those two beads are swept clean every so often and are cleaned. Then, the two arms rub together and brush each other off.

The point of saying this is so that thou know that divine mercy, grace, kindness, and favor are general, not reserved to mankind. For, every worm and gnat has been given that which it should have in perfection. Even the gnat has been fashioned¹⁴⁵⁴ in the same manner that an elephant has. It has not been created for a human being, because it was created for itself, just as thou hast been created for thyself. Thou didst not have a relationship or some patronage before creation by which thou wert deserving of a creation that others did not have. Instead, at that time, the sea of Divine Generosity was an ocean in which there was every thing. One of those things is thou, another is an ant, another a fly, another an elephant, and another a bird. It is thus, notwithstanding that the imperfect among them are sacrificed for the perfect, and (since) a human being is more perfect than (anything else) which is on the earth, more things have necessarily been sacrificed for him.¹⁴⁵⁵

Moreover, beneath the earth and at the bottom of the sea there is many a thing of which man has no portion, but which has been created externally and internally with the same careful attention. Perhaps, the beauty and design on its exterior is such that man would be incapable of (drawing) that. Now, this is related to the studies of the seas in which most scholars are weak, and the discussion of this would be prolonged.

The point of this is that thou should not call thyself one of the chosen of the Divine Presence so that thou measure everything according to thyself and thou say about that in which there is no benefit (for thee): "Why was this created? There is no purpose in it!" When thou hast understood that the ant was not created for thee, know that the moon, the sun, the stars, the heavens, and the angels, all of these also were not created for thee, even though thou hast some benefit from them: just as the fly was not created for thee, even though thou have some benefit

¹⁴⁵³ "legs" (*dast wa pāy*): literally, "arms and legs, that is "limbs.""

¹⁴⁵⁴ "in the same manner": that is, with the same care and attention to its needs.

¹⁴⁵⁵ During this discussion, al-Ghazzali uses the terms "perfect" and "imperfect" forms of life, whereas today we would probably say "higher" and "lower" forms of life. Do we see a theory of the survival of the fittest in this passage?

from it. For, it has been chosen to eat all that is unpleasant to thee and would putrefy, in order to lessen the unpleasant stench. The butcher was not created for the fly, even though there is a benefit from him for the fly. Thy supposition that the sun rises for thy sake every day is like the supposition of the fly that imagines that the butcher goes to his shop every day for its sake so that it will be able to eat its fill of blood and unpleasantnesses. Just as a butcher himself turns to other work so that he does not remember the fly, even though the leavings of his work is the life and sustenance of the fly, the sun is turned to the service of the Divine Presence in its circumambulations and movements and does not remember thee, even though the leavings of its light enable thine eyes to see and the earth is tempered by the leavings of its temperament so that the plants which are thy food may grow. Therefore, there is for us in the purpose of creation that which has no connection with thee and, with respect to the meaning of gratitude, is not useful. There is also much that is related to thee, all of which cannot be mentioned. We shall give a few examples:

One is that eyes have been created for thee for two things: one is that thou know the way to satisfy thy needs in this world, the other is that thou contemplate the wonders crafted by God Most High so that thou may recognize His greatness. When thou lookest at someone not of the prohibited degrees,¹⁴⁵⁶ thou hast become guilty of ingratitude for the blessing of the eyes. Indeed, the blessing of the eyes is not complete without the sun, for without it, they do not see. The sun is not possible without heaven and earth because night and day appear from heaven and earth. And yet thou, with that one glance (at the forbidden) hast been ungrateful for the blessings of the eyes and the sun: indeed, for the blessings of the heavens and the earth. It is for this that it is related in the Traditions: "Heaven and earth curse whoever commits a sin."

Thou hast been given hands so that thou may make ready thine own affairs with them: in order to eat, wash thyself, and the like. When thou usest them to commit a sin, thou hast become guilty of ingratitude for their blessing. Indeed, for example, if thou cleanest thyself after a bowel movement with thy right hand or take the Scripture¹⁴⁵⁷ in thy left hand, thou art guilty of ingratitude. Thou hast violated that which is desired by God Most High, and that is equity. Equity is that the noble be for the noble and the ignoble be for ignoble. Of thy two hands, one is usually stronger than the other, that is the more noble.¹⁴⁵⁸ Thine acts are of two kinds: some are lowly and others noble. One must perform that which is noble with the right (hand) and that which is ignoble with the

¹⁴⁵⁶ "someone not of the prohibited degrees" (*nā mahramī*): someone (of the opposite sex) with whom marriage (and therefore sexual intercourse) is possible.

¹⁴⁵⁷ "the Scripture" (*muṣḥaf*): that is, the Holy Quran.

¹⁴⁵⁸ This refers to the right-handedness with which most people are born.

left (hand), in order to act equitably.¹⁴⁵⁹ If not, like an animal, thou hast eliminated purpose and equity.

If thou spittest in the direction of prayer, thou hast been ungrateful for the blessing of the directions and the blessing of the direction of prayer. The directions are all equal, but God Most High has changed one of them into the direction of prayer for thy welfare so that thou may turn in that direction when thou worshippest, in order that it may be the cause of thy firmness and tranquillity, And He added to that the House¹⁴⁶⁰ which he placed (there) for this purpose.

Thou performest ignoble acts such as voiding wastes, spitting, and noble acts, such as the obligatory purification and formal prayer. When thou holdest all equal, thou hast lived as an animal and thou hast negated what is due for the blessing of intellect, in which equity and purpose appear, and what is due the blessing of the direction of prayer. If, for example, thou breakest the branch of a tree and throw it down needlessly, or thou tossest away a bud, thou hast negated the blessing of thy hand and the blessing of the tree, for that branch had been created and in it there are veins that draw nourishment to itself. In it, the capacity to take nourishment and other capacities have been created. It is for a task for which it becomes useful when it reaches maturity. It is ingratitude to block those channels (of nourishment), except out of necessity for the perfection of thine own needs. In that case, its perfection is sacrificed for thy perfection. For, it is equity that the imperfect be sacrificed for the perfect.

If thou breakest the property of another, it is ingratitude even if thou needest it, because the need of the owner precedes and takes precedence over thy need, however much that in reality a servant (of God) has no property. Rather, the world is like a spread table and the blessings of the world are as the foods placed upon it. The servants of God Most High are like the guests at that table that is the property of no one. But, since each morsel is not promised to all, it is not proper that one guest seize whatever another takes in his hand from him to put into his mouth. The property of the servants (of God) is nothing more than this. As for the guest who is unable to seize any food and put it some place where the no one else can get at it, it is not right for anyone to have anything to do with more than he needs for himself and place it in a cupboard and not give it to the needy.

However, this is not comprehended in the obvious opinion because each individual's need is not known. If we open this path.

¹⁴⁵⁹ Because the left hand is used to wash the privates after voiding urine or excrement while food is eaten with the right hand, the right hand is reserved for noble tasks, such as touching the Quran, and shaking hands; while the left is used for the lowly or more ignoble functions of life.

¹⁴⁶⁰ "the House": the Ka'bah at Makkah, which is the direction of formal prayer.

everyone will take the goods of others and say: "Thou hast no need of this." Therefore, we have left this to rule of necessity, though it is contrary to wisdom. The prohibition against the accumulation of property has come for this, especially with respect to the hoarding of foodstuffs that are the people's sustenance. Whoever hoards in order to sell at a high price is under the curse of God Most High, for it is the people's sustenance. When a business is made out of that, (food) is blocked and does not reach the needy quickly. This is also forbidden with regard to gold and silver, because God Most High created gold and silver for two basic purposes:

One is in order to manifest the value of goods, because not everyone knows how many slaves a horse is worth, or how many garments a slave is worth. These must be sold for each other. Thus, there is the need for something by the standard of which all may be understood. He created gold and silver so that they would be like a magistrate disclosing the value of every thing. Anyone who hoards them in a treasury is as though he has imprisoned a magistrate of the Muslims, and anyone who makes urns and ewers of them is as though he has commanded the magistrate of the Muslims to portage and weaving. For, the purpose of a ewer is to hold water and it could have been made of clay or copper.

The other basic purpose is that these two materials are valued and everything may be obtained by means of them. Everyone desires them, for whoever possesses gold possesses everything. Perhaps a person has a garment but is in need of food. The person who has food does not have a need for a garment to sell¹⁴⁶¹ (the food) for it. God Most High created gold and silver and made them valuable so that business may be carried on by their means so that those who do not have any (goods) may obtain their needs through them. When gold begins to be sold for gold and silver for silver, so that there is a profit in them, these two (precious metals) become engaged with each other and are tied to each other so that they are no longer the means of other transactions.

So, do not suppose that there is in the Religious Law anything that is other than (God's) purpose and justice. Rather, everything that there is (in it) is as it should be. However, some of these purposes are so subtle that no one knows them other than the prophets. Others no one knows except the great religious scholars. Any scholar who has taken up his task by following the superficial is deficient and he is close to the (level of understanding of the) common folk.

When (a good religious scholar) comes to know these underlying purposes, those (things) which the jurists hold to be repugnant, he

¹⁴⁶¹ "sell" (*furūshad*): In this context, it means "barter, exchange."

holds to be forbidden, so that when one of the great put on his left shoe first by mistake, he paid so many donkey-loads of wheat in atonement! But if one of the common folk breaks the branch of a tree, or spits in the direction of prayer, or picks up the Scripture with his left hand, we do not object so much for this lapse, because he is one of the common folk, and the common folk are closer to beasts and do not have the patience to observe these rules. His circumstances are so remote from underlying purposes that such niceties do not appear important to him. For, if a person sells a freedman on Friday at the time of the call to formal obligatory prayer, he is not chastised because a business transaction at that time is disapproved of, but because the crime of selling a freedman overwhelms that disapproval. If a person has a bowel movement in the prayer niche (of a mosque) with his back to the direction of prayer, there is no room left for the chastisement due, because he turned his back toward the direction of prayer for his bowel movement when the crime (of using the prayer niche for a bowel movement) itself is so disgusting that that nicety is not an issue. Leniency with the actions of the common folk is of this kind. The superficial opinion is for the commons. However, the wayfarer on the path to the Hereafter must not look at the superficial opinion but observe all of these niceties so that he may become closer to the angels in justice and purpose. If not, in his abandonment (of the world), he is close to the brutish beasts, like a commoner.

DISCLOSING THAT WHICH IS THE TRUE NATURE OF BLESSINGS

Know that that which God Most High has created with respect to a human being is of four kinds:

THE FIRST is that it is beneficial both in this world and in the next world, such as knowledge and a good character. The true blessings in this world are these.

THE SECOND is that which is harmful in both worlds, such as ignorance and a bad character. The true afflictions of this world are these.

THE THIRD is that it is a comfort in this world and a sorrow in the next world, such as an amplitude of worldly comforts and the enjoyment in them. These are blessings in the opinion of fools and afflictions in the opinion of the wise. This is like the hungry person who must have honey, but in it, there is poison. The one who is a fool does not know that there is poison in it and counts it a blessing; his greed conceals the harm. The one who is wise knows that it is an affliction and harmful.

THE FOURTH is that there is in it sorrow in this world, but a comfort in the next world, such as asceticism and opposition to the carnal appetites. To the possessors of spiritual insight this blessing is as bitter

medicine to the intelligent sick, but it is an affliction in the opinion of fools.

EXCURSUS: [IT IS PROPER THAT SOME THING BE A BLESSING FOR ONE PERSON AND A DETRIMENT TO ANOTHER.]

Know that most of the goods of the world are mixed. There is both evil and good in them, but anything is a blessing (when) its benefit exceeds its detriment. This varies according to individuals. Wealth, in an adequate amount, is more of a benefit than a harm. (However), in that which exceeds sufficiency, there is more harm than benefit with respect to most persons. But there is the person for whom a little is also harmful. The reason for this is that the greed for more overcomes him, while if he had not had anything, he would not have desired anything. And there is the person who is perfect; having much does not harm him because he can aid the needy at the time of their need. So, by this thou knowest that it is proper that a thing be both a blessing with respect to one person and a detriment with respect to another.

EXCURSUS: [THE MOST COMPLETE GOOD IS KNOWLEDGE AND THE MOST COMPLETE EVIL IS IGNORANCE.]

Know that whatever people consider to be a good is not beyond three states: Either it is pleasant at the moment, or it is beneficial in the future, or it is good in itself. Whatever they consider evil is either immediately unpleasant, or is harmful in the future, or is in itself unseemly. Therefore, the most complete good is that in which all three aspects are collected: it is pleasant and good, and is beneficial as well. This is nothing other than knowledge and wisdom. The most complete evil is ignorance, which is unpleasant and ugly, and is harmful as well.

Know that nothing is more pleasant than knowledge, but only for the person whose soul is not ailing. And know that ignorance is painful and unpleasant at the same time. Whoever does not know something and wants to know it perceives the pain of his ignorance. And ignorance is unseemly, but this unseemliness does not appear (externally) on him; it is within the soul. It has distorted the form of the soul, and this is uglier than external ugliness.

There is the thing that is beneficial in the future but is unpleasant, such as cutting off a finger to prevent the total ruin of a hand. And there is the thing that is beneficial in one way but harmful in another, such as when one throws goods into the sea—when the ship is about to sink—in order to save oneself.¹⁴⁶²

¹⁴⁶² By lightening its load.

EXCURSUS: [THERE ARE THREE DEGREES OF DELIGHTS
AND PLEASURES.]

People say thus: that everything which is good is a blessing. Delights and pleasures are of three degrees:

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is that which is the more ignoble, and that is the pleasure of the stomach and the genitalia. People know these best and occupy themselves with them. Whatever they seek, they do for their sake. The proof of their baseness is that all animals are partners with (man) in these, and (the animals) exceed man in them. The eating and copulation of animals is considerable. Indeed, the fly, the ant, and the worm, are all equal to man in this and his partner. When a person gives himself entirely to these (pursuits), he suffices for the degree of the insects of the earth.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the pleasure of victory, chieftainship and the overcoming of others. It is the faculty of anger. Even though it is nobler than the pleasures of the stomach and the genitalia, it is still ignoble, for some of the animals share in this, even though all do not. But among the lions and leopards there is that greed for pride, victory and overcoming (others).

THE THIRD DEGREE is knowledge, wisdom, and the spiritual knowledge of God Most High and the wonders of His handiwork. This is noble, for no animal shares in these. Indeed, these are the attributes of the angels; rather, the attributes of God Most High! Anyone whose pleasure lies in these and in nothing other than these is perfect. Anyone who does not have any pleasure in them is wholly deficient. Rather, he is ailing and is on his way to perdition. Most believers are of these two kinds. Rather, they obtain pleasure in both the former and the latter, and in other things as well, such as the pleasure of chieftainship and carnality. However, for one who is dominated by the pleasure of spiritual knowledge, that (pleasure) veils and overcomes the others. Whoever is overcome by the other—and this be by effort—is nearer the degree of deficiency, but if one strives so that the other triumphs—that is the meaning of the preponderance of the scale-pan of good deeds.

DISCLOSING ALL OF THE KINDS OF BLESSING AND THEIR DEGREES

Know that the true blessing is the (spiritual) happiness of the Hereafter, and that is a desirable end in itself, not for any other blessing which lies beyond it. It is four things:

One is an eternal life that cannot be affected by annihilation.

The second is the joy that is not mixed with sorrow.

The third is a knowledge and a revelation that are free of the dark turbidity of ignorance.

The fourth is a freedom from want that cannot be invaded by poverty or need. In short, this comes with the continual witnessing of the Divine Presence and the Godhead, which are not affected by boredom or decrease. This is a true blessing, and everything we count as a blessing in this world is for its sake and a means and a way to it. It is not the desired end in itself. The perfect blessing is that from which *that* is desired, not anything else. For this the Messenger (S) said: "*Life is the life of the Hereafter.*" The Messenger (S) said this once in the extremity of sorrow to console himself for the misery of the world, and he said it once in the extremity of happiness during the Farewell Pilgrimage¹⁴⁶³ in which his task had achieved perfection and all the people had turned their faces towards him while he was sitting on a camel. He was being asked about the acts of the Pilgrimage. When he saw that that was over, he uttered those words so that his soul would not be deflected by the pleasures of the world. Someone said: "O Lord God, *I ask of Thee the perfect blessing.*" The Messenger (S) heard what he had said and asked (the man): "Dost thou know what the perfect blessing is?" (The man) answered: "No." (The Messenger) said: "It is that thou enter Paradise."

AS FOR THE BLESSINGS OF THE WORLD, whatever is not a means to the Hereafter is not truly a blessing, and that which is the means to the Hereafter is divided among sixteen things: four are in the soul, four in the body, four external to the body, and four common to the twelve.

As for the four that are in the soul, they are the knowledge of spiritual contemplation, the knowledge of mutual relations, chastity, and a just balance.

As for the knowledge of spiritual contemplation, it is to know God Most High and His attributes and His angels and messengers.

As for the knowledge of mutual relations, it is that which we have discussed in this book: the obstacles on the path, as we have said in *The Pillar of the Destroyers*;¹⁴⁶⁴ the provisions for the path, as in *The Pillar of Mutual Relations*;¹⁴⁶⁵ and the stages of the path, as in *The Pillar of the Deliverers*.¹⁴⁶⁶ All are completely made known in this book.

¹⁴⁶³ "the Farewell Pilgrimage" (*Hajj al-Widāʿ*): perhaps the climax and culmination of the Prophet's life. It took place a few months before his death in AH11/632CE. All Arabia had accepted Islam, the Islamic commonwealth was established, and the stage was now set for Islam to become a world religion. The Farewell Pilgrimage is the model for all subsequent pilgrimages. It was in the Prophet's sermon at Arafat that what is almost certainly the last verse of the Quran was revealed, signifying the completion of his mission: *This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you and have chosen for you as (your) religion Islam.* (Q. 5:3)

¹⁴⁶⁴ The Third Pillar.

¹⁴⁶⁵ The Second Pillar.

¹⁴⁶⁶ This Pillar.

As for chastity, it is that one attains the perfection of a good character in the shattering of both the power of carnal passion and the power of anger.

A just balance is that one not eliminate appetite and anger, for that would be detrimental, but one should not permit them to master one so as to go one's head, for that would be an inundation. Instead, they should be weighed with sound scales, as He said: *That ye exceed not the measure, but observe the measure strictly, nor fall short thereof.* (Q. 55:8-9)

All of these four are not complete save with the blessings that are of the body, and they are four: good health, strength, beauty, and a long life. As to the need for health, strength, and a long life for the happiness of the Hereafter, it is not hidden, for without them thou dost not obtain the perfection of knowledge, work, a good character, and the moral excellences in the human soul, which we have mentioned.

However, there is less need for beauty, but the requirements of a good-looking person are more readily satisfied. (Personal) beauty is like rank and wealth in that respect. Whatever is useful for the important wants of the world may be of use in the affair of the Hereafter, since the provisions of the world are the cause of the leisure of the Hereafter: the world is the farmland of the Hereafter. Also, a good exterior is an indication of a good interior; for that is also a favor obtained at the moment of birth. Usually, when one is adorned externally, internally one is also adorned with a good nature. It is for this that it has been said: "Thou dost not see any ugly person whose countenance is not more beautiful than that which is inside him." The Messenger (S) said: "Ask your needs from those of pleasant appearance." And 'Umar said: "When the imams for leading formal prayer are equal in knowledge of the Law, recitation (of the Quran), and piety, choose the best-looking one. Know that we do not desire this handsomeness to arouse passions, for that is a trait of women, but that he be of good stature, with regular features, so that souls and eyes will not be repulsed by him."

As for the blessings needed that are external to the body, they are: wealth, rank, family,¹⁴⁶⁷ household,¹⁴⁶⁸ party,¹⁴⁶⁹ tribe, and great lineage.

¹⁴⁶⁷ "family" (*ahl*): wives, also family in the sense of the extended family including, besides one's own wife and children, relatives such as aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, etc.

¹⁴⁶⁸ "household" (*haram*): or "harem." This term, which conjures up such florid fantasies in the Western mind, simply refers to something private or restricted: not necessarily a seraglio. Here, it refers to wives and children. It is also the term used to describe the great mosque precincts of Makkah, Madinah, Jerusalem, etc. In his exposition of these terms below, Ghazzali omits "household," incorporating it into the category of "family."

¹⁴⁶⁹ "party" (*gurūh*): or group. A group of men one may count on for support, both from among one's relatives and from other clans. The people one associates with in some

The need of the Hereafter for wealth is from the aspect that how can a person who does not have anything, and is everyday engaged in the search for food, study and do anything (else)? Therefore, an adequate amount of wealth is a religious blessing.

As for rank, that is needed because whoever does not have it is always in shame and disdain. He is not safe from the attack of enemies. But, there is harm in an excess of wealth and rank. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever rises in the morning and is in good health, secure, and has the day's food, it is as though he has the whole world." This cannot happen without rank and money. And the Messenger (S) said: *"How good an aid to devoutness to God is wealth!"* (Sufficient) wealth is a good help to piety.

As for family and offspring, they are a blessing in religion, for a family is the cause of rest from working much and a security against the evils of the carnal appetite. Concerning this, the Messenger (S) said: "An honorable wife is a good helper for religion." And 'Umar asked: "What of the world's wealth should I amass?" (The Messenger) replied: "A tongue remembering (God), a grateful soul, and a believing wife." Children are the cause of good supplications after death and a help in life. Good children are like a man's hands, feet, feathers, and wings; they render works successful. This is a blessing if one is wary of their detriment, which is the ambition on their behalf that turns one to the world.

As for an honorable lineage, it is a blessing because leadership¹⁴⁷⁰ is reserved for those of the line of Quraysh. The Messenger (S) said: *"Choose for your seeds the suitable; beware of the greenery of manure."* He has said: "Sow your seed in a suitable place and beware of the greenery that is on top of a dung heap." They asked: "What is that?" He answered: "A beautiful woman from a family of unknown origin." Know that with this lineage he did not intend mastery of the world; rather, the religious lineage that comes with the righteous and the scholarly, for this too is a blessing. Character usually spreads from its origin: the righteousness of the root is an indication of the righteousness of the branch, as God Most High said: *And their father had been righteous...* (Q. 18:82)

And those four blessing that are common to all, they are: guidance, rectitude, confirmation, and finding guidance. There is no blessing without its divine grace. The meaning of divine grace is the setting up of a concordance between the decree of God Most High and the desire of the servant of God. It is both in evil and in good. However,

enterprise which serves to bind them together, such as military units, caravans, and the Pilgrimage.

¹⁴⁷⁰ "leadership" (*imāmat*): In this context, it refers to the caliphate, that is, the leadership of the entire Islamic world.

the term has customarily come to refer to the joining of the desire of the servant of God and the (divine) decree in which lies the servant's well-being. This is fulfilled with four things:

THE FIRST IS GUIDANCE of which no one is not in need, for if a person is seeking the happiness of the Hereafter and if he does not know the way, but knows the wrong way, what is the profit? Therefore, the creation of things without guidance is not enough. For this, God Most High put (us) under an obligation for both, saying: *[(Moses) said: Our Lord] is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright;* (Q. 20:50) and He said: *(God) is He Who measures, then guides.* (Q. 87:3) And know that there are three degrees of guidance:

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is that one distinguish between good and evil. He has given this to all rational beings: some (distinctions are made) by the faculty of the reason and some by the words of the prophets, by that which He said: *And guide him to the parting of the mountain ways?* (Q. 90:10) He desired to show the way of good and evil to (the Messenger). And by that which He said: *(The Thamud) preferred blindness to the guidance,* (Q. 41:17) He meant that whoever is deprived of this guidance, either by reason of envy or pride, or because of worldly affairs, does not heed the prophets or the religious scholars. If (that were) not so, no rational person would be incapable of this.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the special guidance that appears little by little between religious conduct and striving, and opens the way to the underlying purpose. This is the fruit of striving. As He said: *As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths.* (Q. 79:69) He said that when one strives, We Ourselves shall guide him to the way. He did not say: "We Ourselves shall guide (him) to Us." And that which He said is also this: *And as for those who walk aright, He adds to their guidance...* (Q. 41:17)

THE THIRD DEGREE is the guidance reserved for the select. This light appears in the world of prophethood and sainthood. This guidance is to God Most High, not to the way of God. This is in a manner for which the intellect does not have the strength, for it comes of itself to (him). That which He said: *Say: Lo! The guidance of God is the Guidance!* (Q. 6:71) means that it is absolute guidance (*par excellence*). He called it "Revival" and said: *Is he who is dead and We have raised him unto life and set for him a light wherein he walks among men as him whose similitude is in utter darkness?* (Q. 6:122)

As for rectitude, it is that the impulse to travel the way with guidance appear in one. As He said: *And We gave Abraham his rectitude.* (Q. 21:51) A child who has reached puberty is not called rightly

guided¹⁴⁷¹ if he knows how property is preserved and does not do so, even though he has received guidance.¹⁴⁷²

As for finding guidance, it is that the motion of one's limbs move with ease from the aspect of that which is right so that one may quickly attain his goal. So, the fruit of guidance is in spiritual knowledge, the fruit of rectitude is motive and desire, and the fruit of finding guidance is in the power and tools of movement.

As for support, it is composed of the help of the angels from the unseen internally with the sharpness of perception, and externally with the power of strength and movement. As He said: *When I strengthened thee (Mary) with the Holy Spirit.* (Q. 5:110) Chastity is close to this. That is that an impediment appear inside one blocking the way to sin and the darkness of the way, but one does not fully understand where the impediment comes from. As He said: *And she certainly desired him, and he (Joseph) would have desired her if it had not been that he saw proof of his Lord.* (Q. 12:24)

These are the blessings of the world that are the provision for the Hereafter, and these have need of other causes, and these causes have need of other causes, until at the end (of the sequence) one reaches the Guide of the Perplexed and the Lord of Lords, Who is the Causer of Causes. A discussion of all the links in the chain of causes would be lengthy; let what we have said here suffice.

DISCLOSING THE CAUSE OF SHORTCOMINGS OF PEOPLE IN GRATITUDE

Know that there are two reasons for the people's shortcomings in expressing gratitude:

ONE is the ignorance of the many of the blessings of God Most High, for no one knows the limits, amount, and number of the blessings of God Most High. As He has said: *And if ye count God's blessings, ye will not be able to number them.* (Q. 14:34) We have discussed some of the blessings of God Most High in *The Revival* so that it may be understood by analogy that it is not possible to know all the blessings. Further elaboration in this book is not possible.

THE OTHER REASON is that a person does not count as a blessing (for himself) any blessing which is common to all. He never gives thanks for the fine air which he breathes or helps the spirit in his heart and

¹⁴⁷¹ "rightly guided" (*rashīd*): here used in the sense of "mature."

¹⁴⁷² "rectitude" (*rushd*): the Arabic root (*r-sh-d*) contains within it both the meanings such as "growing, growth, maturation," as well as being "rightly guided, righteous, orthodoxy, and following the right way." Al-Ghazzali is making use of both senses here.

which tempers the heat for the heart. If one breath is stopped, he will perish; yet he does not acknowledge this itself as a blessing. Like this, there are a hundred thousand blessings which he does not know, save when he goes to a place for a time where the air is foul and he suffocates, or because the air is hot in a hot bathhouse where he is confined. When he leaves (such a place), perhaps at that time, he will recognize the value of this blessing. Moreover, he does not give thanks for sight so long as he does not have a pain in his eyes or become blind. In this, he is like the bad slave who, so long as he is not beaten, does not know the value of blessings. If he is not beaten, he becomes cocky and negligent. Therefore, the solution of this is that one keep the blessings of God Most High fresh in one's soul, as we have explained in detail in *The Revival*, and that is appropriate for a perfect man.

As for the remedy for the imperfect man, it is that he go to the hospital and go to sultan's prison every day and go to the graveyard every day so as to see diverse afflictions and recognize his own well-being. Perhaps (then), he will occupy himself in giving thanks. When he goes to the graveyard, he knows that all of those dead are in the hope of a single day of life so that they could make up for their faults, but they shall not obtain it—while he has been given long days ahead of him, the number of which he does not know.

As for not being grateful for common blessings, such as the air, the sun, and the clear eye, and (as for) considering all blessings to be material things, and (only) that which belongs to one. One must realize that this is ignorance. For, the state of being a blessing does not depart from something because it is common. Moreover, if one reflects, he has many special blessings. There is no one who does not imagine that no one has an intellect such as he has, or that there is no character like his. It is because of this that he calls others fools and ill-natured, for he does not think that he himself is like that. Therefore, one must occupy oneself in giving thanks, not in criticizing people. Indeed, there is no one who does not have disgraceful acts and faults that he knows, but no one else does and that God Most High has kept veiled. Instead, if one reviews them in memory and thought, should people learn of them, one would be very embarrassed and put to shame. This is something private for every person. He must be grateful for that. He must not hope or speculate about that from which he is excluded so as not to remain deprived of gratitude. Rather he should reflect upon that which was given to him without his meriting it.

Someone complained of poverty to a saint. (The saint) said: "Wouldst thou prefer to lose thine eyes and to have ten thousand dirhams?" (The man) replied: "No." (The saint) asked: "Thine ears, thy hands, thy feet?" He answered: "No." (The saint) said: "Well, then, thou hast fifty thousand dirhams' worth of His goods! Why art thou complaining?" Instead, if thou sayest to most people: "Exchange thy

circumstances for those of so-and-so," they would not do it. They would not be satisfied with the circumstances of most (other) people. Consequently, that which has been given to one, has not been given to most people, and that is cause for giving thanks.

EXCURSUS: [ONE MUST GIVE THANKS FOR AFFLICTION TOO]

Know that one must also give thanks for affliction, because except for unbelief and sin, there is no affliction in which it is not possible for there to be some good which thou dost not know, but God Most High knows better what is good for thee. For every one of five kinds of affliction one must give thanks:

ONE is an affliction that is in the body or in worldly affairs, not in religious affairs. Someone said to Sahl Tustari (R): "A thief entered my house and stole all of my goods." (Sahl) said: "What wouldst thou have done if Satan had entered thy soul and had stolen thy faith?"

THE SECOND is that there is no illness or affliction other than which something cannot be worse. One should give thanks that it is not worse than it is. Whenever a person who deserves to be beaten with a thousand blows is not beaten with more than a hundred, there is cause for gratitude. One of the shaykhs was walking about. From above someone emptied a basin of ashes upon his head. He gave thanks. He was asked: "Why didst thou give thanks?" He replied: "A person who merits fire has been saved with ashes. That is cause for giving thanks and a total blessing."

THE THIRD is that there is no punishment that would not be greater if it were to be postponed to the Hereafter. One must be grateful that it has occurred in this world. That will be the cause of the reduction of much of one's punishment in the Hereafter. The Messenger (S) says: "Whoever has been punished in this world will not be punished in the Hereafter." Affliction is the atonement for sins. As one has atoned for a sin, why would he be punished (in the Hereafter)? Therefore, the physician who gives a bitter medicine or bleeds thee, even though that is unpleasant, is a cause for thanks, for by means of this unpleasantness thou art delivered from the misery of severe illness.

THE FOURTH is that affliction has been forewritten for thee on the Guarded Tablet and is part of the way (to the Hereafter). When it has been eliminated from the way and cast behind, it is cause for gratitude. Shaykh Abu Sa'id, may God have mercy upon him, fell off his donkey. He said: "*Praise be to God!*" They asked him: "Why didst thou say that?" He answered: "I have undergone the falling off of a donkey." That is, it was inevitable because it had been foreordained and ordered in the Divine Decree.

THE FIFTH is that an affliction in this world is a spiritual reward in the Hereafter from two aspects: one is that there is a great spiritual reward for it, as has been related in the Traditions. The other is that at the head of all sinning is affection for the world, so that the world becomes thy Paradise and going to the Divine Presence is thine imprisonment. The soul of whoever has been afflicted with the afflictions in the world is repelled by the world and the world becomes his prison, while death is his liberation. There is no affliction that is not a discipline from God Most High. If a child is intelligent, he will give thanks when his father disciplines him, for there is much benefit in that. In the Traditions, it is related: "God Most High attends to His Own friends with afflictions, just as ye attend to the sick with medicine and potions."

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "I have been robbed." He said: "There is no good in the person whose property is not taken or whose body does not become ill, for God Most High pours affliction upon the servants whom He loves." And he said: "There are many levels in heaven which the servant (of God) cannot attain by his own efforts. God Most High raises them to them by affliction."

One day the Messenger (S) was looking at the sky. He laughed and said: "I remain astonished at the decree of God Most High with regard to the believer. If He commands a blessing, he is content that it is for his good, and if He commands an affliction, he is content that it is for his good." That is, he suffers the latter and is grateful for the former because there is goodness in both. And the (Messenger) said: "The healthy will wish at the Resurrection that their flesh had been cut away with the talons of a leather currier out of pique for seeing the many (high) degrees of the afflicted."

One of the messengers said: "O Lord God, why dost Thou pour blessings upon the unbelievers and why dost Thou pour afflictions upon the believers?" He answered: "The afflictions and the blessings for My servants are all from Me. I want the believers to see Me at the time of death purified and without sin. I make the afflictions of this world (their) atonement. And in the unbelievers, there are goodnesses. I want to recompense (them) for those with worldly blessings so that when one sees Me (on the Day of Resurrection), he will have no claim left upon Me so that I may punish him fully. When this verse was revealed, that whoever does evil will see his requital: *He who does wrong will have the recompense thereof.* (Q. 4:123) (Abu Bakr) the Truly Righteous said: "O Messenger of God, how shall I be saved with this?" (The Messenger) answered: "Dost thou not become ill? Dost thou not sorrow? That is the requital of the believer."

Solomon (A) had a child that died. He sorrowed greatly. Two angels came to him in the form of two litigants. One said: "O messenger of God, I sowed seed in a field. This man trampled upon it." The other said: "He sowed the seed on a highway. As there was not room to the left

or right, I walked over it." Solomon said: "Didst thou not know that thou hadst sown the seed on a highway that would not be empty of travelers?" He answered: "O Solomon, didst thou not know that human beings are on the highway of death that thou hast donned the garments of mourning at the death of a son?" Then Solomon repented and sought forgiveness (of God).

'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz saw his own son sick and in danger of death. He said: "Son, thou goest before me and will be in my scales. I prefer that to my being in thy scales." He said: "O father, I desire that which thou desirest and preferrest."

Ibn 'Abbas (R) was informed that his daughter had died. He said: "*Verily we belong to God and to Him we shall return.*" (Q. 2:156) He covered her nakedness and made sufficient provision and earned spiritual reward. Then he rose and performed two bows of formal prayer and said: "Thus He has commanded: *Seek help in steadfastness and prayer.* (Q. 2:153) I have performed both."

And Hatim Asamm, may God have mercy upon him, said: "God Most High will make four persons witnesses for four groups on the Day of Resurrection: Solomon for the rich, Joseph for the slaves, Jesus for the poor, and Job for the afflicted.

Let this suffice for the study of gratitude in this book.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCERNING FEAR AND HOPE

Know that fear and hope are like two wings for the traveler of the way; whatever praiseworthy stations he reaches, he does so by their strength, for the obstacles which veil the Divine Presence are extremely high. So long as hope is not truthful and the eye does not fall upon the beauty of the Divine Presence, one cannot overcome those obstacles. The appetites on the road of hell are usually deceptive and crushing. Their nets are attractive and difficult. So long as alarm does not overcome the soul, one cannot avoid them. It is for this reason that the grace of fear and hope is great. Hope is as the bridle that draws on the servant of God, while fear is as the whip by which he is driven. Let us first discuss the effect of hope, and then the effect of fear.

THE VIRTUE OF HOPE

Know that the worship of God Most High in the hope of grace and magnanimity is better than worship in anxiety about punishment. For, love rises from hope, and no station is higher than love, while the dread of abhorrence is from fear. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: *"Let not one of you die while he does not have a good opinion of God Most High."*¹⁴⁷³ And he said that God Most High says: "I am there where (My) servant thinks. Say: Think whatever thought thou wishest about Me."

And the Messenger (S) said to someone at the time of death: "How dost thou find thyself?" (The dying man) said: "It is as though I fear because of my sins and I hope for His mercy." (The Messenger) said: "There is no one at such a moment in whose soul both are not joined that God Most High does not grant him security from that which he fears and grants (him) that for which he hopes."

God Most High sent a revelation to Jacob (A): "Dost thou know why I separated Joseph (A) from thee for so many years? Because thou saidst: '*I fear lest the wolf devour him.*' (Q. 12:13)"¹⁴⁷⁴ Why didst thou fear the wolf and not have hope in Me? Thou didst think about the carelessness of his brothers, but thou didst not think about My guardianship." And 'Ali (R) saw someone hopeless because of his many sins. ('Ali) said: "Despair not, for His mercy is greater than thy sins."

The Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High shall say to (His) servant: 'Why didst thou not take action against the evil that thou sawest?' If God Most High calls his tongue to witness,

¹⁴⁷³ Al-Ghazzali follows the Arabic with a Persian translation, omitted here.

¹⁴⁷⁴ See previous note (72).

it will say: 'I feared the people and had hope of Thy mercy.' God Most High will have mercy upon him." And one day, the Messenger (S) said: "If ye knew what I know, ye would weep much and laugh little. Ye would go to the desert and ye would beat your breasts and ye would wail." Then Gabriel came and said: "God Most High says: 'Why dost thou make My people despair of My mercy?'" So, he came out and by God's grace gave (the people) good hopes (for God's mercy).

God Most High sent a revelation to David (A): "Make Me beloved in the hearts of (My) servants." (David) asked: "How can I make them into friends?" (God) answered: "Remind them of My favors and blessings, for they have experienced nothing from Me save My goodness."

Yahya bin Aktham¹⁴⁷⁵ was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee and how?" He answered: "He kept me in the station of interrogation and said: 'O shaykh, thou didst such and such,' until I was overwhelmed by a great dread. Then I said: 'O Lord God, I was not given such information about Thee.' He said: 'How was the information thou wert given?' I said: 'Abd al-Razzaq gave me such information (having heard it) from Zuhri, (who heard it) from Anis, (who heard it) from Thy Messenger Muhammad (S), (who heard it) from Gabriel, (who heard it) from Thee Who said: 'I shall do with My servant what he thinks of Me and expects from Me.' And I had the expectation that Thou wouldst have mercy upon me.' God Most High and Sanctified said: 'Zuhri spoke the truth and My Messenger spoke the truth and Gabriel spoke the truth. I have had mercy upon thee.' Then, I was dressed in a wondrous robe and after that, the servants of Paradise went before me. I experienced a happiness of which there is no likeness."

In the Traditions, it is related that one of the Children of Israel used to cause the people to despair of the mercy of God Most High and would make things very hard for them. On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High will say to him: "This day I shall make thee as despairing of My mercy as thou didst make My people despair of it."

And in the Traditions, it is related that a man is in hell for a thousand years and then he says: "O Compassionate! O Benefactor!" God Most High says to Gabriel: "Go and bring My servant." When he has been brought, (God) asks him: "How didst thou find thy place in hell?" He answers: "The worst of places." (God) says: "Carry him back to hell." As they are carrying him off, he looks back. From God Most High comes a call: "Why dost thou look back?" He answers: "O Lord

¹⁴⁷⁵ Yahyā bin Aktham: an influential 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century personage at the Abbasid court. It is said that Ahmad bin Hanbal (see Note 579) recommended him to the caliph for office. Caliph Mutawakkil (rgd. AH232/847CE to AH247/861CE) appointed him as a judge. He was a teacher of Tirmidhi, the Traditionist. He was also lampooned by a satirical poet, Ibn al-Mu'adhdhal.

God, I was hoping that after Thou hadst brought me out of hell, Thou wouldst not send me back to hell." (God) declares: "Take him to Paradise!" He obtains salvation with that thought and hope.

THE TRUE NATURE OF HOPE

Know that whoever is optimistic about the future, the optimism which he has is called "hope." It may also be called "desire," or it may be called "delusion," or "stupidity." The fools do not distinguish one of these from another and suppose that all of these are hope, and that this hope is praiseworthy, while that is not the case. Indeed, if a person sows good seed and sows it in soft earth and cleans it of thorns and weeds and gives it water at the proper times and hopes that he will reap a harvest and that God Most High will withhold the lightning—this optimism is called "hope." But, if one sows rotten seed on hard ground and does not clean out the thorns and weeds and does not give it water, but hopes that rain will fall in a place where it usually does not rain—but it also not impossible—this is called "wish" and "desire."

In the same way, whoever plants the seed of correct faith on the plain of the breast and cleans the breast of the thorns of bad traits, and irrigates the tree of faith with care in devotion, and hopes that the grace of God Most High will repel disasters and that it will stay that way until the time of death so that he bear his faith soundly (to the Hereafter)—this is called "hope."¹⁴⁷⁶ Its sign is that in the future one commits no fault nor withholds (one's) caretaking, as far as possible. For, laying down the caretaking of tillage is from despair, not from hope. However, if the seed of faith is corrupted so that (its) certainty is not sound, or it is sound but the breast has not been cleansed of bad traits and devotion has not been watered, expecting the mercy of God Most High is stupidity, not hope.

As the Messenger (S) said: *"The fool is one who himself follows the impulses of his self and who desires of God, may He be honored and glorified, his longings."* The fool is he who does whatever he wants and expects (God's) mercy. Indeed, God Most High said: *And a generation has succeeded them who inherited the Scriptures. They grasp the goods of this low life and say: 'It will be forgiven us.'* (Q. 7:169) He reproached those persons who, after the prophets had delivered knowledge to them but they had become immersed in the world, said: "We expect that God Most High will have mercy upon us."

Therefore, when anything has been exhausted, the necessities of which are related to the discretion of a servant (of God), the fruit of expectation is hope. When the necessities are destroyed, the fruit of expectation is stupidity and delusion. If they are not destroyed, but not in

¹⁴⁷⁶ "umīd" is the Persian equivalent of the Arabic "rajā'."

good form, (the fruit of expectation) is wishing. The Messenger (S) said: *"There is no religion in desiring."* The task of religion is not managed with wishing. Therefore, whoever repents must hold the hope of acceptance. For, whoever does not repent, but is sorrowful and troubled because of his sinning and has the expectation that God Most High will accept his repentance, there is the hope that his misery will be the cause that will draw him to repentance. However, if he is not sorrowful and hopes for repentance, it is delusion. If he hopes for forgiveness without repentance, it is in the same way delusion, even if fools call this hope. God Most High says: *Lo! Those who believe, and those who emigrate and strive in the Way of God, these have hope of God's mercy.* (Q. 2:218) Those have accepted the faith and who have left their wishes in their own cities and habitations and have chosen expatriation and who have striven against the unbelievers—for them there is cause to hope of My mercy.¹⁴⁷⁷

Yahya Mu'adh says: "There is no stupidity greater than that of the one who strews live coals and expects Paradise and seeks the mansion of the devout while he performs the works of the rebels (against God), or hopes for spiritual reward for unperformed works."

There was a person called Zayd al-Khayl.¹⁴⁷⁸ He said to the Messenger (S): "I have come to thee to ask what the sign is that God Most High wishes well for a person, and what the sign is that He does not wish well for him." (The Messenger) answered: "Every day when thou arise, how art thou?" (Zayd) said: "As though I love goodness and the doers of good. If some good appears, I perform it quickly and I recognize its spiritual reward with certainty. If it passes me by, I become miserable and remain unhappy in the desire for that." (The Messenger) said: "This is the sign that He has wished well for thee. If He had wanted the other, He would have engaged thee in it and then there would not have been any dread as to in which of the valleys of the world He would have destroyed thee."

THE REMEDY FOR OBTAINING HOPE

Know that no one has need of this medicine except for two ailing persons: one is he who has become despairing because of the multitude of his sins and does not repent, saying that it would not be accepted. The other is he who destroys himself with the multitude of his efforts and devotions and the many pains he imposes upon himself that he cannot

¹⁴⁷⁷ Al-Ghazzali's paraphrase of the afore-cited verse.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Zayd al-Khayl: the chief of the deputation from Tayyi' (in northern Hijaz) who came to the Prophet during the Year of Delegations (AH10/631-2CE). The Prophet praised him and called him Zayd al-Khayr (Zayd the Good; Zayd al-Khayl means "Zayd of the Horses"). Sadly, he died on the way home of a fever apparently contracted at Madinah.

endure. These two sick persons are in need of this medicine. However, this medicine is not for the heedless. Hope overcomes for two reasons:

THE FIRST REASON is heeding a warning. One reflects upon the wonders of the world and upon the creation of plants, animals, and the different kinds of blessings—as we have discussed previously in the Chapter on Gratitude¹⁴⁷⁹—until one perceives a mercy, favor, and kindness that cannot be exceeded. Indeed, if one examines oneself and how He has created everything one would need, even that which is absolutely necessary such as the head and heart; or that which is not absolutely necessary such as the hands and feet; or how He has created that which is adornment such as the redness of the lips, the arch of the eyebrows, or the blackness and straightness of the eyelashes. He has performed this mercy upon all animals. Even on the bee there are many delicacies of (His) handiwork in the symmetry of its form and the beauty of its coloring, and the guidance which He has given it so that it builds its own house and in which it stores honey, and in how it obeys its queen, and how their queen makes policy. Whoever meditates upon such marvels, external and internal, in himself and in all created things, knows that mercy is greater than that which would allow room for despair or that fear should overcome (one).

Instead, fear and hope should be equal; so, if hope overcomes, there is room for that. The signs of the kindness and mercy of God Most High in creation themselves have no limit, so that one of the saints says that there is no verse in the Quran offering more hope than the *Verse of Lending and Borrowing* (Q. 2:282),¹⁴⁸⁰ for God Most High revealed the longest verse in the Quran in order to preserve our property lest it would be lost by giving loans. This is one remedy for obtaining hope and it is of a very infinite greatness, but not everyone can attain that degree.

THE SECOND REASON is meditation upon the (Quranic) verses and Traditions of hope, which are also beyond numbering.¹⁴⁸¹ As in the Quran, it is said that no one should despair of “My mercy”: *Despair not of the mercy of God.* (Q. 39:53) The angels will ask for your forgiveness: *(The angels) ask forgiveness for those on earth.* (Q. 42:5) Hell is for the purpose of keeping the unbelievers in it; but ye are tormented and

¹⁴⁷⁹ That is, the previous chapter.

¹⁴⁸⁰ This verse (Q. 2:282) is the longest in the Holy Quran and deals with lending, borrowing, and other business transactions, plus the strict requirements for the witnessing and recording of such transactions.

¹⁴⁸¹ In the Quran, the word *rahmah* (mercy) occurs, in one calculation, 114 times; the words *rahmān* and *rahīm*, both from the root meaning “mercy” and names of God meaning “the Merciful, the Compassionate” occur 57 and 95 times respectively. This does not include verbal and other permutations of the root.

frightened by it: *With this God does appall His servants.* (Q. 39:16) And the Messenger (S) was not content with begging forgiveness for his people day and night until this verse was revealed: *Truly thy Lord is rich in pardon for mankind despite their wrongdoing.* (Q. 13:6) When the verse was revealed: *And verily the Lord will give unto thee so that thou wilt be content,* (Q. 93:5) He said that Muhammad would not be satisfied so long as one of his people was in hell. There are many such verses.

As for the Traditions, the Messenger says: "My people are immune: their punishment will be in the world: turmoil and earthquakes. When the Day of Resurrection comes, an unbeliever will be handed over to each one and (the Muslim) will be told: 'This one is thy sacrifice in hell.'" And he said: "Fever is a heat-prostration from hell; that is the portion of the believer from hell."

Anas says: "The Messenger (S) said: 'O Lord God, make the accounting of my people with me lest anyone see their bad deeds.' (God) said: 'They are thy peoples and My servants. I am more merciful with them. I do not desire that anyone see their bad deeds; neither thou, nor another.'"

And the Messenger (S) said: "My life is good for you and my death is good for you. If I am alive, I teach you the Religious Law; if I am dead, your deeds will be displayed before me. I shall praise and give thanks for those which are good and I shall ask forgiveness for those which are bad."

One day the Messenger (S) said: "O Generous in Pardoning!" Gabriel (A) said: "Dost thou know what the meaning of that is? It is that He pardon the unseemly and exchange it for goodness."

He (S) said: "When a servant of God sins and asks forgiveness, God Most High says: 'O angels, look! My servant has sinned and he knows that he has a Master Who will not take him for the sin but will forgive him. I take you to bear witness that I have forgiven him.'"

And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'If one of My servants sins to the extend of the heavens and the earth, I shall forgive him when he asks for forgiveness and puts his hope in Me.' And He said: 'If a servant has sins to the fill the earth, I have mercy for him to fill the earth.'"

And he (S) said: "An angel does not record the sin against a servant of God until six hours have passed. If he repents and asks forgiveness, (the angel) records nothing. If he does not repent but he asks forgiveness and performs devotions, the angel on his right hand says to the other (angel): 'Discard this sin from his record as I shall discard, too.

a good deed in exchange for that. Every good deed (counts) for ten. Nine will remain for him."¹⁴⁸²

And he (S) said: "When a servant of God commits a sin, it is recorded against him." A desert Arab asked: "If he repents?" (The Messenger) answered: "It is erased." (The desert Arab) asked: "If he returns to that?" (The Messenger) said: "It is recorded." (The Arab) asked: "And if he repents?" (The Messenger) said: "It is erased." (The Arab) asked: "For how long?" (The Messenger) replied: "As long as he seeks forgiveness. God Most High does not tire of forgiving so long as (His) servant does not tire of asking forgiveness. When one intends to do a good deed, the angel records a good deed before it is performed. If he performs it, (the angel) records 'ten,' then he increases it up to seven hundred. When one intends to commit a sin, (the angel) does not record anything. If he commits it, (the angel) records 'one,' and there is the hope of the pardon of God Most High."

A man said to the Messenger (S): "I fast the month of Ramadan and perform the daily five obligatory formal prayers, but I do not exceed that. I am not obligated to pay the poor rate or to go on Pilgrimage because I have no property. Shall I be with thee on the Day of Resurrection?" The Messenger (S) smiled¹⁴⁸³ and said: "Thou wilt be with me if thou preservest thy soul from two things: from fostering enmity and envy; if thou restrainest thy tongue from two things: slander and lies; and if thou restrainest thine eyes from two things: looking at those of the prohibited degrees and looking at the servants of God Most High with contempt. Thou wilt enter Paradise together with me and I shall hold thee dearer than this, the palm of my own hand."

A desert Arab asked the Messenger (S): "O Messenger of God, who will take the account of the people in the Hereafter?"¹⁴⁸⁴ (The Messenger) answered: "God Most High." (The man) said: "He Himself?" (The Messenger) said: "Yes, He Himself." The desert Arab laughed. The Messenger (S) said: "Dost thou laugh, O man of the desert!" (The other) replied: "Yes, for when the Generous obtains, He pardons; when He reckons, He is lenient." The Messenger said: "Thou speakest correctly, for there is no one more generous than God Most High." Then he added: "This desert Arab is a jurisprudent!" Then, the Messenger said: "God Most High has made the Ka'bah noble and great. If someone were to

¹⁴⁸² This arithmetic is explained in the following Tradition.

¹⁴⁸³ "(he) smiled" (*khandid*), following the AA text. HK has *gumārad* which has the common meaning of "appoint, entrust," etc., which does not seem appropriate here. A rarer meaning of the verb *gumārīdan*, recorded by Steingass, is "to gnash the teeth in indignation," which also seems inappropriate in this context. Other dictionaries consulted only treat it as a variant of *gumāshdan* with the meaning of "appoint, entrust," etc. The Arabic of *The Revival* uses the verb for "he smiled" (*tabassama*).

¹⁴⁸⁴ "in the Hereafter" (*fardā*): literally, "tomorrow."

destroy the Ka'bah and pull it down stone by stone and burn it, his crime would not be of the degree of that were he to make light of one of the friends of God Most High." The desert Arab asked: "Who are the friends of God?" He answered: "All believers are His friends. Hast thou not heard the verse: *God is the Friend of those who believe; He brings them out from darkness into light?*" (Q. 2:257)

And he said: "God Most High says: 'I created mankind so that they would benefit from Me, not so that I would benefit from them.'" And he said: "Before He created mankind, God Most High prescribed for Himself: 'My mercy overcometh My anger.'" And he said: "Whoever has said *There is no god but God* in sincerity shall go heaven. Whoever's last words are those shall not see hellfire. Whoever goes to the next world without ascribing partnership to God shall not enter the fire." And he (S) said: "If ye had not sinned, God Most High would have created another people so that they might sin in order (for Him) to forgive them. For, He is Forgiving and Compassionate." And he said: "God Most High is more merciful to His servant than a mother is kind to her child."

And he (S) said: "God Most High will show so much mercy on the Day of Resurrection such as the soul of any of His servants has never experienced; to such an extent that Iblis will raise his head in the hope of mercy." And he (S) said: "God Most High has one hundred mercies. He has put aside ninety-nine until the Day of Resurrection and not revealed more than one mercy in this world. All souls are merciful by that one mercy, even the mercy of the mother for her child and the mercy of the animal for its young. All are from that one mercy! On the Day of Resurrection, that one mercy will join the ninety-nine and be spread over mankind, each mercy as great as the storeys of the heavens and the earth. No one will be destroyed on that Day except those who are destroyed in eternity without beginning." And he (S) said: "I have reserved my intercession for the committers of mortal sins among my people. Do not suppose that it is for the devout and the pious. Rather, it is for the polluted and the confused."

Sa'd bin Bilal¹⁴⁸⁵ said: "Two men are brought out of hell on the Day of Resurrection. God Most High says: 'That which ye have suffered ye suffered for your evil deeds, for I do not oppress My Own servants.' And He commands that they be taken back to hell. One of the two goes off hurriedly in chains and irons while the other hangs back. (God) commands that both be brought back. He asks him who had hurried: 'Why didst thou do thus?' (The man) replies: 'I was afraid. Because of the punishment I have experienced for (my) disobedience, I did not have the audacity to pause when the command came.'" And the other says: "I

¹⁴⁸⁵ Sa'd bin Bilal: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

had a happy thought and I hoped that since Thou hadst brought me out of hell, Thou wouldst not send me back.' For these reasons, He sent both of them to Paradise."

And the Messenger (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, a Crier will cry out: 'O people of Muhammad, I have done what is Mine with regard to your affair, but your claims over one another remain (to be settled). Do this to one another and enter Paradise.'" And he (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, one of my people will be brought up before all mankind and ninety-nine ledgers. As far as the eye can see, he will see only sins. God, may He honored and glorified, asks: 'Dost thou deny any of all these (sins) and have the angels been unjust in recording them?' He answers: 'No, O Lord.' (God) asks: 'Hast thou any excuse?' He answers: 'No, O Lord,' and he sets his heart on hell. God says: 'I have a good deed of thine and I oppress thee not.' Then a piece of paper is brought forward upon which is written: *I testify that there is no god but God and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.* Then the servant of God asks: 'How can this piece of paper suffice for all those ledgers?' (God) says: 'They are not unfair to thee. They place all of those ledgers in one pan of the scales and that piece of paper in the other pan. And that piece of paper, which is heavier than all (in the other pan), causes all (of thy sins) to be lifted away, for nothing overcomes the Unity of God Most High.'"

And he (S) said: "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High commands the angels to bring out of hell anyone in whose soul there is mustard seed's (weight) of goodness. They bring many out. Then they say: "No one of this class of people remains." (God) says: 'Bring out anyone in whose soul there is half a mustard seed's (weight) of goodness.' They bring out many more. The Fire says: 'None of these people are left.' Then He says: 'Bring out everyone in whose heart there is an atom of goodness.' Throngs of people are brought out and they say that no one with an atom of goodness in him remains. The intercession of the angels and prophets and the believers has all been completed and has been answered. Nothing is left for the mercy of the Most Merciful of the Merciful. He takes a handful out of hell and brings out some believers who had never done any good, even an atom's worth. All had become as black as charcoal. He throws them into one of the streams of heaven, that which is called the River of Life. They come out of that pure and bright, as greens that come from the midst of flowing waters, shining like pearls with small stones¹⁴⁸⁶ about the neck so that the inhabitants of heaven may recognize them. They say: 'These are all those who have done no good deeds liberated by God Most High.' Then He will say: 'Enter Paradise: all that ye see is yours.' They will say: 'O Lord God, Thou hast given us

¹⁴⁸⁶ "small stones" (*muhrah-hā*): or "beads" or "small shells."

what Thou hast not given any of the inhabitants of heaven.' He will say: 'Ye are greater to Me than that.' They will say: 'O Lord God, what is greater than this?' He will say: 'My satisfaction, for I am pleased with you, for I never become displeased.'" This Tradition is found in the *Sahih* of Bukhari and the *Sahih* of Muslim.¹⁴⁸⁷

'Amr bin Hazm¹⁴⁸⁸ says that the Messenger was absent for three days, coming out (of his house) for nothing except the obligatory formal prayers. When it was the fourth day, he came out and said: "God Most High given me promise, saying: 'I shall forgive 70,000 of thy people without reckoning and place them in heaven.' During these three days, I begged for more. I found God Most High magnanimous and generous: for each one of those 70,000, He gave me 70,000 more."¹⁴⁸⁹ I said: 'O God! How many shall my people be?' He said: 'I shall complete this number from all of the wandering Arabs.'"

It is related that a child was captured in one of the expeditions in defense of the faith and was placed for auction on a very hot day. The eye of a woman in a tent fell upon that child and she ran out and the people in that tent ran out after her. She snatched the child up and clasped it to her breast and gave it shade with her own body so that heat would not affect it. She cried: "This is my son." When the people saw this, they wept and left off their work because of her great compassion. Then, the Messenger (S) arrived there and was told the story of what had happened. He rejoiced at their compassion and their weeping, and he said: "Are ye astonished by the compassion and mercy of this woman for the boy?" They said: 'Yes, O Messenger of God.' He said: "God Most High is more merciful upon all than this woman is for her own son." Then, the Muslims dispersed from that place with a joy the like of which there had never been.

Ibrahim Adham, may God have mercy upon him, said: "One night I was circumambulating (the Ka'bah) by myself and it was raining. I said: 'O Lord God, preserve me from sin so that I have no fault.' I heard a voice from the direction of the Ka'bah. It said: 'Thou desirest sinlessness and all My servants desire that very sinlessness. If I keep all from sinning, then to whom shall I make known My grace and mercy?'"

Know that there are many such Traditions, and let them be the cure of the person whose fear overwhelms him. The person who is

¹⁴⁸⁷ "the *Sahih* of Bukhari and the *Sahih* of Muslim": Two of the six collections of Traditions accepted by Sunni Muslims as reliable. Among these six, those of Bukhari and Abu Muslim are considered the most comprehensive and authentic.

¹⁴⁸⁸ 'Amr bin Hazm: a Companion of the Prophet. After the Banu Harith of Yemen accepted Islam, he was sent by the Prophet to Yemen to instruct them in Islam and collect alms.

¹⁴⁸⁹ That is, God shall forgive 4,900,000,000 men and women of the People of the Prophet without reckoning, *inshallah*.

dominated by heedlessness must understand that in all of these Traditions it is apparent that some believers will go to hell. The hindmost person will be the one who comes out of hell after seven thousand years. Since it is possible with respect to any person that he be that one, one must take up the way of resoluteness and circumspection. As much as one can, one must strive not to be that person. If one passes up all the pleasures of the world in that fear so that one not have to be one night in hell, it would be fitting, so what could one say about seven thousand years?¹⁴⁹⁰

In short, fear and hope should be in balance, as 'Umar (R) said: "If it is announced that tomorrow no one will enter Paradise save one person, I shall think that I may be that one person. And if it is said that no one will enter hell save one person, I shall think that I will be that person."

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE OF FEAR AND ITS TRUE NATURE AND TYPES

Know that fear is one of the great stations, and its virtue is appropriate to its causes and its results.

As for its causes, they are knowledge and spiritual insight, as will be explained after this. About this, God Most High said: *Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear God.* (Q. 35:28) And the Messenger (S) said: "*The head of wisdom is the fear of God.*"¹⁴⁹¹

As for its results, they are chastity, Godliness, and piety. All of these are seeds of (spiritual) happiness, for one cannot travel the way to the Hereafter without surrendering the carnal appetites and (without possessing) patience. Nothing burns away appetite like fear. It is for this that God Most High has combined for the (God-)fearing guidance, mercy, knowledge, and pleasure and sent three verses in the Quran. The first is: *A guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord.* (Q. 7:154)¹⁴⁹² Another is: *Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear God.* (Q. 35:28) And He said: *God is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him; this is for him who fears God.* (Q. 98:8) Piety, which God Most High has joined to Himself, is a result of fear. He said: *...but piety from you reaches Him.* (Q. 22:37)

¹⁴⁹⁰ There was (and is) a widespread belief that the world will end in 7,000 years, though the Day of Resurrection is known only to God.

¹⁴⁹¹ In Arabic: *Ra's al-hikmat makhāfat-Allāh.*

¹⁴⁹² This verse (Q. 7:154) refers to the tablets of the Law given to Moses. The complete verse is: *then, when the anger of Moses abated, he took up the tablet, and in their inscription there was guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord.*

And the Messenger (S) said: "That day on which mankind will be gathered on the plain¹⁴⁹³ of the Resurrection, a Crier shall address them in a voice heard far and near, saying: 'O people, I have heard all your words from the day on which I created (you), so today listen to My words and pay attention, for I shall place your affair before you. O people, ye have set down a lineage and I have set down a lineage. Ye have exalted your lineage and have dismissed My lineage. I have said: *Lo! The noblest of you in the sight of God is the most god-fearing*; (Q. 49:13)—the greatest among you is the most pious. Ye say: 'Great is that person who is so-and-so the son of so-and-so.' Today, I exalt My lineage and dismiss your lineage. *Where are the god-fearing?*—Where are the devout?' Then, a banner will be raised and brought forward, and the devout will follow after it until all have entered Paradise without accounting." It is for this reason that He doubled the spiritual reward of the fearing when He said: *But for him who fears the standing before his Lord there are two gardens*. (Q. 55:46)

The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High says: 'By My power, I do not impose two fears and two securities upon a single servant. If he fears me in the world, I shall make him secure in the Hereafter; but if he is secure (in the world), I shall keep him in fear in the Hereafter.'" And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever fears God Most High, all things fear him. Whoever fears God Most High not is frightened by everything." And he said: "The one with the most perfect intelligence amongst you is the one who fears God Most High the most." And he said: "There is no believer who sheds a single tear drop because of fearing God Most High—even if it is in the amount of a fly's wing that touches his cheek—whose face is not forbidden to the Fire." And he said: "When the hair of a servant of God stands up because of his fearing God Most High, and he thinks upon that, his sins fall away as leaves from a tree." And he said: "Everyone who weeps because of fear of God Most High will not go into the Fire, so long as milk which comes out of the breast will not flow back (into the breast)."

'Ayishah (R) says: "I asked the Messenger (S) whether any of his people would enter heaven without accounting. He answered: 'Yes, he who trembles when remembering his sins.'" And said the Messenger (S): "No drop is more beloved by God Most High than the tear drop that is shed out of the fear of God and the drop of blood which is shed in the way of God Most High." And he said: "There will be seven persons in the shade of the Throne of God Most High on the Day of Resurrection: one among these seven is the person who weeps when remembering God

¹⁴⁹³ "plain" (*ṣaʿīd*): literally, "the surface of the earth."

Most High in private." Hanzalah¹⁴⁹⁴ says: "I was with the Messenger (S) and he was counseling us so that souls had become attenuated and tears were flowing. Then, I returned home and my family began to talk and I became immersed in worldly talk. Then, I recalled the words of the Messenger (S) and I came out because of my weeping and I was shouting: 'Ah! Hanzalah has become a hypocrite!' Abu Bakr (R) appeared and said: 'Thou hast not become a hypocrite.' I went to the Messenger (S) and said: 'Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.' He said: '*Of course Hanzalah has not become a hypocrite!*' Then, I recounted my story. He said: 'O Hanzalah, if thou hadst continued as thou wert when thou wert with me, angels would take thy hand on the roads and in houses; but, O Hanzalah, hour by hour.'" ¹⁴⁹⁵

NON-PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: Shibli, may God have mercy upon him, says: "There never was a day in which fear (of God) overwhelmed me that one of the gates of wisdom was not opened to me." Yahya bin Mu'adh says: "The sin of a believer is between the fear of punishment and the hope of mercy like a fox between two lions." He also said: "If the destitute person would fear hell as he fears poverty, he would enter heaven." He was asked: "Who will be more fortunate tomorrow?" He answered: "He who is more frightened today." Someone asked Hasan Basri: "What dost thou say in the public assembly that frightens us so much that our hearts are torn apart?" He said: "It is better that ye tell the people: 'Ye are frightened today so that ye will attain security tomorrow,' than that ye tell the people: 'Ye have security today and ye will attain fear tomorrow.'" Abu Sulayman Darani says: "No soul is free from fear that is not in ruins."

'Ayishah said: "I asked the Messenger (S): 'What is that which is said in the Quran they do and they fear: *They give what they give with hearts afraid?* (Q. 23:60) Is this theft or adultery?' He said: 'No, they perform obligatory formal prayer, they keep the fast, and they give in charity and they fear that it will not be accepted (by God).'" Muhammad bin Munkadir, when weeping, would rub his tears (on his face) and say: "I have heard that every place the tears reach will never burn." (Abu Bakr) the Truly Righteous says: "Weep and if ye cannot, make yourselves." Ka'b Ahbar says: "By God, let me weep so that the water flows on my face. I prefer that to giving a few heaps of gold to the poor."

¹⁴⁹⁴ Hanzalah: Hanzalah bin Abū 'Āmir, a Companion of the Prophet. At the battle of Uhud (AH3/625CE), when Abu Sufyan had been bested by Hanzalah, he was attacked by Shaddad al-Aswad and killed. It was about him that the Prophet said: "Your Companion, Hanzalah, is being washed by the angels."

¹⁴⁹⁵ "hour by hour" (*sa'atī wa sa'atī*): Literally, "an hour and an hour." That is, one must be in that state hour after hour.

‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar says: “I prefer one tear drop shed out of fear of God Most High over giving a thousand dinars in charity.”

THE TRUE NATURE OF FEAR

Know that fear, too, is one of the states of the soul and it is the fire of a pain that appears in the soul. It has causes and results.

As for its causes, they are knowledge and spiritual insight, because one understands the danger of the affair of the Hereafter and one understands that the causes of his destruction are prepared and overpowering. This fire of pain necessarily appears in the midst of his soul and arises from two spiritual insights:

ONE is that one sees his own defects truly: his own sins, the blights upon his acts of devotion, the malignancies of his character. And with these faults, he sees the blessings of God Most High upon himself. He is like the person who has received robes of honor and favors from a king, and has then betrayed (the king) in his family quarters and treasury. Then, he suddenly realizes that the king has seen him in his treacheries and he knows that the king is jealous, avenging, and fearless. (The man) knows no one close to the king to intercede on his behalf. He has neither means nor relationship. The fire of pain will necessarily appear in his soul when he sees the imperilment of his own affair.

AS FOR THE SECOND INSIGHT, it does not spring from his nature: rather, it springs from fearlessness and its power, which he fears. Just as when a person falls into the claws of a lion and is afraid, not because of his own sin, but because he knows about the nature of the lion which is about to kill (him) and that it has no fear of him and his weakness. This fear is more complete and superior. And whoever knows the attributes of God Most High and has come to recognize His majesty, greatness, and fearlessness—for if He destroys the entire world and keeps it in hell eternally, not one atom of His kingdom would be diminished, and His essence is above the reality of that which is called kindness and compassion—there is room for him to be afraid. The prophets had this fear too, even though they knew they were innocent of sins. Whoever becomes more familiar with God Most High becomes more frightened. The Messenger (S) said about this: “I am the most knowing of God among you and the most fearing.” For this reason, He said: *Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear God.* (Q. 35:28) The more ignorant a person is, the more secure he feels. A revelation came to David (A): “O David, fear Me as thou wouldst fear an enraged lion.” This is the cause of fear.

AS FOR THE RESULTS OF FEAR, they are in the soul, in the body, and in the limbs. As for those in the soul, they make the carnal appetites loathsome to one and there is no care for them. For, if a person has a craving for a woman or some food, when he falls into the claws of a lion or into the prison of a harsh ruler, no care about that appetite is left to him. Rather, the state of his soul in fear is total humility, submissiveness, and abjectness. It is all observation, calculation, and looking at consequences. No pride remains, neither envy, appetite for the world, nor heedlessness. As for its results in the body, they are emaciation and pallor. And its results in the (bodily) limbs are keeping them pure from sins and making them obedient in devotion (to God).

The degrees of fear are various: if it keeps one from the carnal appetites, it is called chastity. If it keeps one from the unlawful, it is called scrupulousness. If it keeps one from the doubtful or from the lawful from fear of the unlawful, it is called piety. If it keeps one from everything except the provisions for the road to the Hereafter, it is called truth¹⁴⁹⁶ and the person is called truly righteous.¹⁴⁹⁷ Chastity and scrupulousness are beneath piety and all of these are beneath veracity. In reality, this is fear. As for him who weeps and shaves (his head) and says: *There is no power nor strength except with God*, and then goes back to his heedlessness, this is called the weakheartedness of women. This is not fear, for whoever fears something flees from it. A person who has something in his sleeve looks to see whether it is a snake. It is not possible for him to content himself with a *There is no power (nor strength except with God)*; rather, he throws it down. Dhul-Nun was asked: "Who is the fearing servant of God?" He replied: "He who feigns sickness so that he may avoid all carnal appetites because of the fear of death."

THE DEGREES OF FEAR

Know that in fear, too, there are three degrees: weak, strong, and moderate. The most praiseworthy of them is moderate. Weak is that which does not prompt a person to act, such as the mildness of women. Strong is that from which there is the fear of hopelessness, the fear of illness, losing consciousness, and death. Both of these are blameworthy, for fear in itself is not a perfection as (are) the Divine Unity, spiritual

¹⁴⁹⁶ "truth" (*sidq*): *sidq* and *siddiq* (see following Note) are derived from the Arabic root *ṣ-d-q*. The root meaning is "speaking the truth, being sincere, telling the truth about something, coming true," etc. It carries the sense of veracity, candor, honesty, and scrupulous truth telling.

¹⁴⁹⁷ "truly righteous" (*siddiq*): or "a faithful witness of the truth." A very high rank in Islam.

insight, and love. It is for this that it is not included among the attributes of God Most High. Moreover, there is no fear without ignorance and feebleness, for so long as the outcome is unknown and there is no inability to avoid peril, there is no fear. But, fear is perfect when it is joined to the state of the heedless. It is like the whip that instructs children and moves animals on their way. When it is so weak that there is not sufficient pain, it is not instructive nor does it direct on the way. Or, when it is too strong, children and animals are injured or (bones are) broken. Neither of these is beneficial; rather, it should be (applied) in moderation in order to restrain one from sin and make one eager for devotion.

The fear of whoever is more learned is more moderate, for when it becomes excessive, he reflects again upon the causes of hope. When it becomes weak, he reflects again upon the dangers of the affair. Whoever does not fear and calls himself learned has learned that which is useless, not knowledge, like the fortune-teller in the market who calls himself a wise man, but has no hint of wisdom. The beginning of all spiritual insights is that one come to know oneself and God Most High: oneself with (one's) defects and shortcomings, and God Most High with His greatness, majesty, and His not being afraid to destroy the world. Nothing is born from these two insights other than fear. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: *"The beginning of knowledge is the insight into the Omnipotent and the end of knowledge is entrusting the affair to Him."* He said: The beginning of knowledge is that thou know God by His omnipotence and vanquishing. And, the end is that, servant-like, thou entrust thine affair to Him and that thou know that thou art nothing and that thou hast nothing. How would it be possible that a person know this and not fear?

DISCLOSING THE KINDS OF FEAR

Know that fear arises from the knowledge of danger. Each person has a different danger before him. There is the person to whom hell comes before him, and his fear is of that. There is the person to whom something comes that is of the path to hell, so that he fears that he may die before he repents; or he fears that he may fall into sin again; or that hardness and heedlessness may appear in his soul; or that his habits may carry him to the threshold of sin; or his vanity may overcome him because of his blessings; or that he may be caught on the Day of Resurrection because of his oppressions of the people; or that his scandals may become public and he be disgraced; or he fears that something may occur in his thought that God Most High sees and knows and of which He does not approve.

The benefit of each of these is that one work upon that which he fears. When he fears that (bad) habits will carry him to sin, he flees from the path of (those) habits. When he fears the knowledge of God Most High, he keeps his soul pure. In the same way, the most overwhelming to his fearful soul is the fear of the conclusion,¹⁴⁹⁸ lest he not take his faith (with him) intact (to the Hereafter). More perfect than this is the fear of the past as to what has been decided with respect to his tribulations or happiness, for the conclusion is the corollary of the past. The reality is that which the Messenger (S) said from the pulpit: "God Most High has written a book and the names of the inhabitants of Paradise are in it." He raised his right hand and he said: "He has written another book, and the names of the inhabitants of hell together with their lineage and particulars are in it." He raised his left hand and he said: "There will be no increase nor any reduction in them. And there are of the people of happiness: those who perform the deeds of the wretched, so that all will say that he is of (one of the wretched condemned to hell). Then God Most High will turn him away from that road before his death—even if it be but an hour away—and bring him to the road to happiness. Happy is he who is happy in the eternal decree and wretched is he who is wretched in the eternal decree, but the (important) matter is the ending."¹⁴⁹⁹

Therefore, for this reason, the fear of the perspicacious is of this and that is more perfect, just as fear of God Most High by reason of the attributes of His Majesty is more perfect than the fear by reason of one's own sins; for that fear will never depart. When one fears sin, it may be lead to the delusion: "Since I have stopped sinning, what have I to fear?"

In short, whoever recognizes that the Messenger (S) will be at the highest of the degrees and Abu Jahl¹⁵⁰⁰ in the lowest degree of hell, though neither possessed any means or crime prior to creation. When He created (them), He made easy the way of spiritual insight and devotion to the Messenger, causelessly on his part. It was made necessary that his desire be used for that. He would not have been able to conceal from himself that which was shown and revealed to him. He would have been unable to distance himself from that which he knew to be a fatal poison. But Abu Jahl, whose vision was shut off, was unable to perceive. Since he did not see, he was unable to hold himself back from appetites without recognizing their detriment. So both were compelled. However, as He

¹⁴⁹⁸ "conclusion" (*khātimat*): that is, death.

¹⁴⁹⁹ In this Tradition, the Prophet is saying that our fate is preordained and that is unchangeable. If it appears that a person who is destined for heaven is on the road to hell, God will intervene and set him on the right path, even if it is an hour before his death. How things end is what is important.

¹⁵⁰⁰ Abu Jahl: Abū Jahl (the Father of Ignorance), an implacable opponent of the Prophet whose real name was ʿAmr bin Hishām. Mentioned by this epithet in Q. 111:1. Q. 22:8 is also thought to allude to him. He was a boastful and debauched man and was killed in the battle of Badr (AH2/624CE).

intended, He commanded one to wretchedness causelessly and drove him to hell. He commanded one to happiness and carried him to the highest of the high with the chain of force. Whoever issues such commands as He wishes has no fear, but fearing Him is inevitable. It is for this that He said to David (A): "Fear Me as thou wouldst fear a roaring lion," for a lion does not fear to destroy. If it stops, it is not because of compassion or anxiety that it releases thee, but because of thine unimportance to it. It is not possible for whoever has understood these attributes of God Most High to be free from fear. *And God is the Best Knower.*

DISCLOSING THE BAD ENDING

Know that most of the fearful have been afraid of the ending, because the human soul is (constantly) changing and the time of death is an awesome moment. It is not possible to know what it will settle upon at that time. One of the spiritually insightful of religion even says: "If I have known a person (to be) in the Unity (of God) for fifty years, since he has been absent from me many times behind walls, I cannot swear to his (adherence to the creed of Divine) Unity, because the condition of the soul is changeable. I do not know into what it may turn." Another says: "If they say: 'Dost thou prefer martyrdom at the door of (thy) house or death as a Muslim at the door of (thy) chamber?' I say: 'Death as a Muslim at the door of (my) chamber, because I do not know whether (my) Islam will remain as far as the door of the house or not.'" Abu Darda used to swear: "No one is secure from having his faith taken from him at the time of death."

Sahl Tustari says: "With every breath the truly righteous are fearful of a bad ending." At the time of death, Sufyan Thawri, may God have mercy upon him, lamented and wept. They said: "Do not weep, for the pardon of God Most High is greater than your sins." He said: "If I knew I would die in the Unity, I would not fear, even though I have sins in the amount of several mountains." One of the saints made a will and gave what things he had to a person, saying: "The sign of my dying in (the faith of) the Unity (of God) is such-and-such a thing. If thou seest that sign, buy sugar and almonds with that money and toss them upon the children of the city and say: 'This is the wedding of so-and-so who has escaped.' If thou dost not see that sign, say to the people of the city that they should not offer a formal prayer for me and not be deceived by me so that after death, anyway, I may not be a hypocrite."

Sahl Tustari says: "A disciple fears that he will fall into sin, while the knower fears that he will fall into unbelief." Abu Yazid says: "When I go to the mosque I see a belt¹⁵⁰¹ about my waist and until the

¹⁵⁰¹ "belt" (zunnār): A belt worn by Eastern Christians and Jews.

moment I enter the mosque, I fear that it will take me to a church. It is the same five times every day." Jesus (A) said to his disciples: "Ye fear sins and we who are prophets fear unbelief." One of the prophets was afflicted by much hunger, thirst, and trouble for many years. So he complained to God Most High and a revelation came: "I preserve thy soul from unbelief and thou art not delighted by that so that thou desirest the world?" He answered: "O Lord God, I repent and I have become delighted." He threw dust upon his head out of shame for his request.

One of the reasons for a bad ending is hypocrisy. It was for this that the Companions always were in fear of hypocrisy. Hasan Basri, may God have mercy upon him, said: "If I were sure that there is no hypocrisy in me, I would have no fear of anything on the face of the earth." And he said: "A difference between the inside and the outside and (between) the heart and the tongue is hypocrisy."

EXCURSUS: [THE CAUSES OF A BAD ENDING]

Know that the meaning of the bad ending of which all are afraid is that one's faith be taken away at the time of departure.¹⁵⁰² There are many reasons for this and its knowledge is hidden, but it can be said in this book that it arises from two causes:

ONE is that a person believes in a vain heresy and passes his life holding that (belief) and does not imagine that (the belief) itself could be a mistake. When death is near, affairs are revealed. It may be that the error be disclosed to him and for that reason he may become doubtful about the (other) beliefs that he had as well, because his confidence in his own belief has left him and he departs from the world holding those doubts. This peril is for the heretic and for the person who travels the path of scholastic dispute, even though he be scrupulous and pious. However, the fools and the smug who are Muslims in appearance, as mentioned in the Quran and the Traditions, consider themselves secure from this. The Messenger (S) said about this: "*Let the religion of old women be yours; most of the inhabitants of heaven are guileless.*" For this reason, the forefathers prohibited scholastic dispute, argument, and inquiry in the essential nature of things, for they knew that not everyone could endure that and one quickly falls into heresy.

THE SECOND REASON is that (one's) faith is essentially weak and the love for the world is victorious over the love for God Most High. At the time of death, when one sees that all his lusts are taken away from him and that he will be driven out of the world by force and be taken to a place he does not desire—perhaps because of the disliking of that which He does to him—he will change and the weak love (he formerly had for

¹⁵⁰² "the time of departure": death.

God) will also be nullified, as a person who loves a child, but that love is weak. When that child takes something which (the parent) loves more than he loves the child, (the parent) takes the child as an enemy and that amount of love that he had is also lost. It is for this that the rank of martyrdom is so great, for at that moment the world has departed from before him. The love for God has triumphed and he has laid his body on death. In such a state, death's arrival is a great booty, because this state changes rapidly and the soul will not continue in that character. So, for whomever the love of God Most High is stronger than all else, that will necessarily keep him from giving all of himself to the world. He is more secure from this danger. And when the moment of death arrives and he knows that the moment of seeing the Friend has come, the coming of death will not be displeasing and the love for God Most High will become triumphant. The love of the world becomes void and disappears. This is the sign of a good ending.

Therefore, whoever desires to distance himself from this peril must distance himself from heresy and believe in that which is in the Quran and the Traditions. He must strive so that God Most High becomes dominant over him and the love for the world becomes weak, and vanishes. It weakens when one observes the limits of the Law so that the world becomes loathsome to him and he averts oneself from it. The love for God Most High becomes stronger by always remembering Him and by association with His friends, not with the lovers of the world. So, if (thy) love for the world be stronger, (thy) affair is in (greater) danger, as He said in the Quran: "If ye love your father, children, wife, property, ease, and all that ye have more than God Most High, then be prepared until the command of God Most High arrives": *Then wait until God brings His command to pass.* (Q. 9:24)¹⁵⁰³

THE PROCEDURE FOR ACQUIRING THE FEAR (OF GOD)

Know that the first station of the stations of religion is certainty and spiritual insight. Then, fear arises from spiritual insight, and from fear asceticism, patience, and repentance arise. Truth, sincerity, care in the remembrance (of God), and continuous meditation appear from fear, and from them familiarity and love arise. And this is the end of the stations. Satisfaction, commitment, and zeal: all of these follow upon love. As a consequence, the alchemy of (spiritual) happiness, after

¹⁵⁰³ The verse which Al-Ghazzali is paraphrasing runs thus: *Say: If your fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, and your wives, and your tribe, and the wealth ye have acquired, and the merchandise for which ye fear that there will be no sale, and the dwellings ye desire are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait until God brings His command to pass. God guides not wrongdoing folk.* (Q. 9:24)

certainty and spiritual knowledge, is fear. Whatever is after that cannot be managed without it. This may be obtained in three ways:

THE FIRST WAY is through knowledge and spiritual insight. For when one has come to know oneself and God Most High, one will necessarily fear God Most High. Whoever has fallen into the claws of a lion and who knows the (nature of the) lion will have no need for any treatment to become afraid. Rather, he becomes fear itself! Whoever recognizes God Most High in His majesty and power, (Who is) without any need for mankind, and who recognizes himself in his helplessness and distress, sees himself truly in the claws of a lion. Moreover, any one will necessarily be afraid who recognizes the decree of God Most High, that everything that will be until the Resurrection has been decreed—happiness for some without any means and hardship for others without any crime—instead, it is as He desires and that never changes. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: “Moses (A) argued with Adam (A) and Adam also argued with Moses. Moses said: ‘God Most High brought thee to Paradise and did so many good things; why didst thou disobey His command so that thou threwest thyself and us into affliction?’ (Adam) answered: ‘Was that sin preordained for me in the beginning?’ (Moses) answered: ‘Yes.’ (Adam) said: ‘Would I have been able to disobey His command?’ (Moses) said: ‘No.’ *So Adam overcame Moses.* Moses was cut off by Adam and did not reply.”

Many are the gates of spiritual insight that arise from fear. Whoever is more insightful is more fearing, so that it is narrated: “Gabriel (A) and the Messenger (S) were both weeping. A revelation came to them: ‘Why do ye weep when I have made you secure?’ They said: ‘O Lord god, we are not secure from Thy cunning.’ He said: ‘Remain in that manner.’ It was from the perfection of their spiritual insight that they said: ‘Let what He said to us—that we are safe—not be a test and that there be some mystery under that which we are unable to perceive.’” On the day (of the battle) of Badr, in the beginning, the Muslim army had been weakened and the Messenger (S) was afraid. He said: “O Lord God, if these Muslims are destroyed on the face of the earth, no one will remain to worship thee.” (Abu Bakr) Siddiq said: “What oath dost thou swear by God Most High? He has promised thee aid and He will necessarily execute His promise.” The station of Siddiq at that moment was confidence in (God’s) promise and generosity, while the station of the Messenger (S) was fear of cunning. This was more perfect because he knew that he could not perceive the secrets of divine affairs, His arrangements in the management of (His) kingdom, and the intention of His decree.

THE SECOND WAY is that if one is unable (to achieve) spiritual insight, he should associate with those who fear (God), so that their fear

may spread to him and he may distance himself from the heedless. By these means, fear is obtained, although by imitation, as a child's fear of snakes (is) because he has seen his father flee from them. He too is afraid and runs away, even though he does not know the characteristics of snakes. This fear is weaker than the fear of one who knows, for if the child sees a few snake charmers who handle them, just as he fears by imitation, so he will feel safe by imitation and he touches them. One who knows the nature of snakes does not become secure about them. Therefore, one imitating the fear (of the knowers) must avoid associating with the complacent and heedless, especially that person who is outwardly learned.

THE THIRD WAY is that when one cannot find such people with whom to associate—and there are few remaining in this era—one should listen to (stories of) their states and character and read of them in books. For this reason, we shall recount some of the states of the prophets and saints with respect to fear so that whoever has a modicum of intellect may know that they were the most intelligent, most insightful, and most virtuous of mankind, yet they feared thus. Others should be even more fearful.

STORIES OF THE MESSENGERS AND ANGELS

It is related that when Iblis was cursed (by God), Gabriel and Michael wept continuously. God Most High sent a revelation to them: "Why do ye weep?"—and He is More Knowing—they said: "O Lord God, We are not secure from Thy devisings." He said: "That is as it should be. Be not complacent."

Muhammad bin al-Munkadir (R) says: "When He created hell, the angels wept; when He created man, they became silent, for they knew that He had created it for them." The Messenger (S) says: "Gabriel never came to me but that a trembling fell upon me out of fear of God Most High." Anas says: "The Messenger (S) asked Gabriel: 'Why do I never see Michael smiling?' (Gabriel) answered: 'Since the Fire was created, he has not smiled.'"

Mujahid says: "David (A) wept for forty days with his head pressed against the ground until plants grew from his tears. A call came: 'O David, why dost thou weep?' (David) cried out: 'A stick would burn from the fire of my self.' Then, God Most High accepted his repentance. (David) said: 'O Lord God, inscribe my sin upon the palm of my hand lest I forget it.' (God) complied. He would not extend his hand for any food or drink without seeing that and weeping. Sometimes he would be given a cup of water not full and he would fill that cup with his tears."

It is related that David (A) wept so much that he lost his strength. He said: "O Lord God, wilt Thou have mercy upon my weeping?" A revelation came: "Thou dost talk of weeping! Hast thou forgotten thy sin?" He answered: "O Lord God, how could I forget that when before my sin, when I recited the psalms, flowing water in the streams and the blowing wind in air would stop and the birds of the sky would gather over my head and the desert beasts would come to my place of prayer. Now there is nothing of that. O Lord God, what terror is this?" (God) said: "O David, that was the intimacy of devotion and this is the terror of sin. O David, Adam was my servant. I created him with My Own Gracious Hand and breathed My Own Spirit into him. I commanded the angels to prostrate themselves before him and I cloaked him with the honored robe of wonder. I placed the crown of dignity upon his head. He complained of his loneliness. I created Eve from his side and I brought them both to Paradise. I drove them out, despised and naked, from My Presence because of one sin. O David, listen! Listen to the truth: thou hadst Our devotion. We had thy devotion. I gave thee what didst desire. Thou didst commit a sin. We gave thee a reprieve. Now with all of this, if thou dost turn back to Us, We shall accept thee."

Yahya bin Kathir says that there is a story that when David (A) was intent upon lamenting for his sin, he would not eat anything for seven days, nor go to his women. He would come to the desert and command Solomon (A) to call out: "O people of God, whoever desires to hear the lamentation of David, come." Then people from the towns, birds from their nests, wild animals and predatory beasts from the wildernesses, reptiles from the mountains and the desert would head for that place. He would begin with the praise of God Most High and the people would cry out. Then he would describe the features of heaven and hell. Then he would mourn his sin so that many people would die of fear and anxiety. Then Solomon (A) would stand over him and say: "Enough, O father, for many people have perished!" They would announce that so-and-so and so-and-so has received the command¹⁵⁰⁴ so that their family would come and carry off the corpses. Each person would pick up his corpse so that one day of the forty thousand people who were at the assembly thirty thousand had perished. He had two servant girls whose duty it was to seize him at the time of fear and hold him lest his limbs not come apart (from each other).

And John the son of Zechariah (A) used to worship in Jerusalem. He was a child. When (other) children called him to play (with them), he would say: "He has not created me for play." When he was fifteen, he went to the desert and left mankind. One day, Zechariah (A) passed by him. He saw (his son) standing beside some water and was on the point

¹⁵⁰⁴ "has received the command": that is, "has died."

of death from thirst. (John) was saying: "By Thy power, I will not drink water so long as I do not know what my place is with Thee." He had wept so much that no flesh remained upon his face and his teeth had become visible and he had placed a piece of felt on his face so that the people would not see it. There are many stories similar to these about the prophets.

STORIES OF THE COMPANIONS AND THE FOREFATHERS

Know that when (Abu Bakr) Siddiq, with all of his greatness, would see a bird, he would say: "I wish that I were that bird." Abu Dharr Ghaffari would say: "I wish that I were a tree." 'Ayishah said: "I wish that there were neither name nor sign of me."

Sometimes 'Umar, when hearing a verse of the Quran, would fall down and become unconscious and people would visit him for several days. There would be something resembling two black lines on his face from weeping. He would say: "I wish that 'Umar had never been born of his mother." Once, he was passing by a house. Someone was reciting the Quran. (The reciter) had come to the verse: *Lo! The doom of thy Lord will surely come to pass; there is none that can ward it off.* (Q. 53:7-8) He descended from his animal and threw himself against a wall out of weakness. They took him home and he was ill for a month, and no one knew the cause of his illness.

When 'Ali bin al-Husayn (R) would perform the obligatory purification (for formal prayer), his face would become pale. They would ask: "What is this?" He would say: "Do ye not know before Whom I am about to stand?"

Musawwir bin Makhzamah¹⁵⁰⁵ could not endure listening to the Quran. One day, a stranger who did not know (Musawwir's) custom, recited these verses: *On the Day when We shall gather the righteous unto the Beneficent, a goodly company, and drive the guilty into hell, herding;* (Q. 19:85-86) and said: "We are of the guilty, not of the pious." (Musawwir) said to him: "Recite it again." (The stranger) did so. (Musawwir) cried out and gave up the ghost.

Hatim Asamm says: "Do not be deceived by a fine place, for there is no place better than Paradise. Dost thou know what happened to Adam in Paradise? Do not be deceived by a plethora of acts of worship. Dost thou know what happened to Iblis? Do not be deceived by a lot of knowledge, for Bal'am Ba'ura had reached the point in knowledge so that he knew the Great Name of God Most High. Concerning him, it was

¹⁵⁰⁵ Musawwir bin Makhzamah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

revealed: *And his likeness is the likeness of the dog.* (Q. 7:176)¹⁵⁰⁶ And do not deceive thyself with looking upon good men, for relatives of the Messenger (S) saw him frequently and associated with him, but did not become Muslims.

Sari Saqati, may God have mercy upon him, says: "I look into my nose every day and ask if my face has become black." 'Ata-yi Sulami was one of the fearers. He did not laugh for forty years, nor did he look at the sky. He looked at the sky once and fell down out of fear. Every night, he would pass his hand over himself several times to see whether he had been metamorphosed or not. When some calamity, trouble, or famine would reach the people, he would say: "All of this is because of my evil. If I were to die, the people would be delivered."

Ahmad Hanbal, may God have mercy upon him, says: "I offered supplications so that God Most High might open one of the doors of fear to me. He answered my supplications. I feared that I would lose my reason. I said: 'O Lord God, (let it be disclosed) according to one's ability to bear it.' Then my soul calmed down." One of the pious worshippers of God was seen weeping. He was asked: "Why dost thou weep?" He answered: "Out of fear of that Hour in which mankind will be summoned to present themselves at the Resurrection."

Someone asked Hasan Basri, may God have mercy upon him: "How art thou?" He replied: "What would be the condition of a person who is with some people on the sea, the ship is wrecked and each one remains on a board?" They said: "Difficult." He said: "That is how I am." He also said: "It is related in the Traditions that one is brought out of hell after a thousand years. I wish that I could be that person." He said this because he feared the evil ending of eternal (damnation) in hell.

Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz¹⁵⁰⁷ had a serving girl.¹⁵⁰⁸ One day, she woke up from sleep and said: "O Commander of the Believers, I dreamt something strange." He said: "Tell me." She said: "I saw hell burning. The bridge was stretched over it and the caliphs were brought out. First, I saw 'Abd al-Malik Marwan¹⁵⁰⁹ brought forth and told: 'Cross this bridge.' It was not long before he fell into hell. Then they brought forth his son Walid bin 'Abd al-Malik, and he fell in immediately. Then, his

¹⁵⁰⁶ Commentators consider this to be a reference to Bal'am and associate it with the period of Moses. If the commentators are correct, this would identify Bal'am with the Biblical Balaam, whose complex story is found in Numbers 22-24. The story is discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and in the separate *Moses*, extracted from it.

¹⁵⁰⁷ 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz: 'Umar II, the son of 'Abd al-'Aziz: the eighth Umayyad caliph. rgd. AH99/717 CE to AH101/72CE0. See Note 784.

¹⁵⁰⁸ "a serving girl" (*kanīzak*); or, "concubine."

¹⁵⁰⁹ 'Abd al-Malik (bin) Marwan: 'Abd al-Malik, the son of Marwan. He was the fifth Umayyad caliph, rgd. AH64/685CE to AH86/705CE.

son Sulayman bin Abd al-Malik¹⁵¹⁰ was brought forth and the same occurred." ('Umar) said: "Continue." She said: "Then, O Commander of the Believers, they brought thee forth." When she said that, 'Umar cried out, and fell down unconscious. The girl cried out: "By God, I saw that thou hadst crossed safely!" The girl was crying out and he was writhing (on the floor).

Hasan Basri did not laugh for years. He would always appear like a tormented prisoner whose head is about to be cut off. He would be asked: "With all of thy worship and striving, why art thou so overtaken by troubles?" He would answer: "I am not certain that God Most High may not have seen something in me to make Him my enemy and say: 'Do whatever thou wishest, for I shall not have mercy upon thee,' and all of my efforts will have been in vain."

There are many stories similar to these. Look, now, how they feared (God) and thou feelest secure! It is either because they had committed many sins and thou hast not, or because they had much spiritual insight, and thou hast it not. Thou, because of foolishness and heedlessness, feel safe in spite of thy many sins; and they, because of their clear perception and spiritual insight were anxious, in spite of their many acts of devotion.

EXCURSUS: [WHICH IS SUPERIOR, FEAR OR HOPE?]¹⁵¹¹

At the same time that a person says there are many Traditions about the virtues of fear and hope, which of these two is superior and which should win over the other? Know that fear and hope are like two medicines. One does not say a medicine is superior, but that it is more beneficial. For fear and hope, as we have said about attributes, are deficient. The perfection of a human being is that he be immersed in his love for God Most High, so that his remembrance takes hold of his totality and he does not think about the past itself or the ending itself. Instead, he looks at time, but he does not look at time either, rather he looks at the Lord of Time. When he pays attention to fear and hope, this becomes a veil; however, such a state is rare. So, whoever is approaching the time of death must be hopeful, for this increases love. And whoever is going from this world must be in the love for God Most High so that meeting Him will become his (spiritual) happiness, for there is pleasure meeting the Beloved.

¹⁵¹⁰ Sulayman bin 'Abd al-Malik: the seventh Umayyad caliph, the son of 'Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, rgd. AH96/715CE to AH99/717CE. He succeeded his brother Walid (rgd. AH86/705CE to AH96/715CE) to the caliphate. HK incorrectly calls him "Sulayman bin (son of) Walid."

¹⁵¹¹ From the AA text.

But at other times, if a man is one of the heedless, fear must overwhelm him, because the triumph of hope would be a fatal poison for him. If he is pious and his states and conditions are free from vice, his fear and hope should be moderate and equal. When he is engaged in worship and devotions, hope should be stronger; for the purity of the heart in conversation with God is a kind of love. However, at the time of sinning, fear should be stronger. Indeed, during the time of doing lawful things, fear should predominate—if a man is worshipful. If not, he may fall into sin. Therefore, these are medicines the benefits of which change according to conditions and individuals. The answer to this (question) is not absolute.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCERNING POVERTY AND ASCETICISM

Know that the circuit of the way of religion is based upon four principles, which we have discussed in the Prolegomena:¹⁵¹² thy self, God Most High, the world, and the Hereafter. Of these, two are to be sought and two to be escaped: escaping from the self in order to seek God Most High, and escaping from the world in order to seek the Hereafter. Consequently, thou must turn from thy self to God Most High and thou must turn from the world to the Hereafter. Patience, fear, and repentance are all the preliminaries of this. Love for the world is among the Destroyers, as we have discussed its treatment;¹⁵¹³ while enmity to the world and cutting oneself off from it are among the Deliverers. Now we shall explain these: poverty and asceticism are among them. First, thou must learn the true nature of these.

THE TRUE NATURE OF POVERTY AND ASCETICISM

Know that a poor man is he who does not have what he needs and does not obtain it. First of all, a human being needs his own existence; then, he needs his own continuance. Then, he needs food, money, and many other things. None of these things is under his control and he is in need for all of them. The rich person is he who has no need of anything other than himself, and this is not other than the One, Exalted be His Glory! All else that comes into existence of jinn, mankind, angels, and devils—none of them have control over their own existence or continuation. As a result, in reality, all are poor. It is for this that God Most High says: *And God is the Rich One and ye are the poor.* (Q. 47:38) God is without any need and ye are all poor. Jesus (A) explained the poor this way, saying: *"I am become a surety for my deeds, but the affair is in the Hand of Another; verily, there is no poor man poorer than I. I am the pledge of my own deeds and the key to my deeds is in the Hand of Another. Which poor man is poorer than I?"* Indeed, God Most High also explained this, saying: *And my Lord is the Rich, the Possessor of mercy. If He so desires, He may remove you and make whom He pleases successors after you.* (Q. 6:133) He said: "He is rich who, if He wishes, may destroy all and create a new race." Therefore, all people are poor, but the word "poor" on the tongues of the Sufis is applied to a person who sees himself in this character. This state dominates him so

¹⁵¹² Al-Ghazzali is referring to the four Topics of the Prolegomena at the beginning of this work.

¹⁵¹³ See Chapter Five of the Third Pillar.

that he knows that he has nothing and that he has no control over anything in this world and in the next world, neither in the origin of creation, nor in the continuation of creation.

As for what a group of fools say — that thou art poor when thou dost not perform any devotion and then, when thou performest acts of devotion and credit the spiritual reward to thyself, then thou hast something and thou art not poor. This is the seed of heresy¹⁵¹⁴ and Libertinism¹⁵¹⁵ that Satan has sown in their souls and Satan sows (it) by these means for the fools who claim shrewdness. For, he conveys an evil import to good words, so that the fool is deceived by those words and imagines that he himself is clever. It is as though a person were to say: "Whoever has God, has everything; therefore, he must become free of God Most High in order to be poor." Rather, poor is he who performs devotions; as Jesus (A) says: "Devotion is not mine, nor is it under my control, rather I am its pledge." In short, the meaning of poverty intended by the Sufis is not the object in this place, nor is the explanation of human poverty in all things. Rather, we intend to discuss poverty from wealth. Of a hundred thousand things needed by a person that he lacks, wealth¹⁵¹⁶ is one of them.

Therefore, know that the non-existence of wealth is either because a man refrains from it by choice, or that he does not obtain it. If he refrains from it, he is called an ascetic, but if he does not earn it, he is called poor. There are three states of poverty:

One is that one does not have wealth, but pursues it as much as one is able. He is called the "avaricious poor man." The second is that one does not seek it and if it is given to him, he does not accept it and it is repugnant to him. He is called an ascetic. The third is he who neither seeks it nor does he reject it. If it is given to him, he accepts it; if is not given, he does not ask for it. He is called a contented poor man.

We shall first discuss the virtue of poverty, then the virtues of asceticism; for there is also a virtue in the absence of wealth, even though man is greedy for it.

¹⁵¹⁴ "heresy" (*zandaqah*): This particular heresy is the belief in the two principles of light and darkness that was the basis of the ancient Iranian religion and had great influence in the Graeco-Roman world, affecting even Christianity and Judaism. The Arabic word *zandaqah* derives from the *Zand*, which was a commentary on the *Avesta*, the sacred scripture of the Zoroastrians, who were called fire worshippers. The term is also used more generally to signify heresy.

¹⁵¹⁵ "Libertinism" (*ibāḥāt*): See Note 165.

¹⁵¹⁶ "wealth": *māl*. It should be remembered that the word *māl* denotes wealth in a general sense: it can be money, precious metals, jewels, personal property, clothing, landed property, or just anything of value. The English word "wealth" usually is used to mean "great wealth," but here it means these things in any amount, great or little. It is not synonymous with "rich," nor is it restricted to "money."

THE VIRTUE OF POVERTY

Know that God Most High says: *for the poor emigrants*; (Q: 59:8)—the “poor” take precedence over the “emigrants.”¹⁵¹⁷ And the Messenger (S) said: “God Most High loves the pious poor man having a family.” And he said: “O Bilal, try to be poor when thou intend to leavest this world, not rich.” And he said: “The poor of my people shall enter heaven five hundred years before the rich.” In another Tradition, it is “forty years.” Perhaps, he intended in the latter (version) the avaricious poor person and in the former (version) the happy, contented poor person. And he said: “The best of my people are the poor and the earliest persons to walk about heaven will be the weak.” And he said: “I have two callings. Whoever loves both of them, loves me: poverty and defense of the faith.” It is related that Gabriel (A) said: “O Muhammad, God Most High greets thee and says: ‘Dost thou desire that I change all of the mountains of the earth into gold so that they will come with thee where thou wishest?’ He said: ‘No, O Gabriel, for the world is the house of those without houses and the wealth of those without wealth. The accumulation of wealth in it is the work of fools.’” And (Gabriel) said: “*O Muhammad, God has made thee firm in firm speech.*”

Jesus (A) passed by someone sleeping. He said: “Arise and remember God.” (The man) asked: “What dost thou want from me? I have left the world and its inhabitants.” (Jesus) said: “Then sleep, O friend, sleep well.” Moses (A) passed by a sleeper sleeping on the ground who had placed an adobe brick under his head. He had nothing other than a coarse cloth. (Moses) said: “O Lord God, this servant of Thine is lost. He has nothing.” Revelation came: “O Moses, dost thou not know that I withhold the world totally from him to whom I turn My Countenance totally?”

Abu Rafi‘ says: “A guest came to the Messenger (S) and he did not have anything. He said to me: ‘Go to such-and-such a Jew and ask him to lend me some flour which I shall return to him on the first of Rajab.’¹⁵¹⁸ I went to him and the Jew said: ‘No, by God! I shall not lend anything without security.’ I told the Messenger (S) what (the Jew) had said. He said: ‘By God, I am trustworthy in heaven and I am trustworthy upon earth. If he had lent it, I would have returned it. Now make this chain mail of mine the surety.’ I did that. This verse was revealed to him to make him happy: *And strain not thine eyes toward that which We cause some wedded couples among them to enjoy the flower of the life of*

¹⁵¹⁷ Al-Ghazzali means that by God’s phrasing it *for the poor emigrants* instead of *for the emigrant poor*, God is stressing poverty over the emigration (from Makkah to Madinah).

¹⁵¹⁸ Rajab: the seventh month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

the world... (Q. 20:131)¹⁵¹⁹ "Thou shouldst not look out of the corner of thine eye at the world and the inhabitants of the world for all of that is their temptation. That which has been set aside for thee with God Most High is better and more enduring." Ka'b al-Ahbar says: "Revelation came to Moses: 'O Moses, when a poor man turns to thee, say: 'Welcome to the sign of the righteous.'"

And the Messenger (S) said: "Paradise was shown to me; most of the inhabitants of Paradise were the poor. Hell was shown to me; most of the inhabitants of hell were rich." And he said: "I saw fewer women in Paradise. I asked where they were. They said: '*Their work is the two reds: gold and saffron.* They have been imprisoned by gold and colorful clothing.'" And it has been related: "A prophet passed by the edge of the sea. He saw a fisherman throwing his net. (The fisherman) said: 'In the name of God Most High.' No fish were caught. Another fisherman threw his net, saying: 'In the name of Satan.' He caught a vast number of fish in the net. (The prophet) said: 'O Lord God, I know that all this is from Thee, but what is the reason for this?' God Most High said to the angels: 'Show the places of those two fishermen in heaven and in hell.' They showed them to him. When he saw that, he said: 'O Lord God, I am content.'" And our Messenger (S) said: "The last person among the prophets to enter heaven will be Solomon (A) because of his riches."

And Jesus (A) said: "The rich man will enter heaven with great difficulty."¹⁵²⁰ Our Messenger (S) said: "When God Most High loves a servant, He afflicts him with calamities. If the love is complete. He acquires him." They asked him: "What is (this) acquisition?" He replied: "He leaves him neither wealth nor family." Moses (A) said: "O Lord God, who are Thy friends so that I make take them as friends?" He answered: "Wherever there is a poor person; a poor person meaning complete poverty."

And the Messenger (S) said: "The poor man will be brought forth on the Day of Resurrection. As men apologize to each other, God, may He be honored and glorified, will apologize to him, saying: 'My servant, it was not because of thy humbleness that I withheld the world from thee. Rather, it was so that thou wouldst obtain My generosity and honors. Now, go among these ranks of mankind. Whoever gave thee some food one day for My sake, or gave thee clothing, take his hand and bring him out, for I have put him in thine affair.' The people will be drowning in sweat that day. He will go forth and take the hand of anyone who had been good to him and bring him out from amongst the believers." And he said: "Become acquainted with the poor and do good

¹⁵¹⁹ Al-Ghazzali does not quote the entire verse in Arabic. It continues: *that We may try them thereby. The provision of thy Lord is better and more lasting.* (Q. 20:131)

¹⁵²⁰ Cf.: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Mk. 10:21)

to them, for their wealth is on the way." They asked: "What is that?" He said: "At the Resurrection, they will seize the hand of whoever amongst the believers gave them a drink of water or a bit of food or some old clothes and lead them to Paradise."

And the Commander of the Believers 'Ali (R) relates: "The Messenger (S) said: 'Whenever the people turn to worldly acquisition and its cultivation, and are hostile to the poor, God Most High will afflict them with four things: prolonged famine, the oppression of the ruler, the treachery of judges, and the glory and the strength of the unbelievers and enemies.'"

Ibn 'Abbas (R) says: "That person is accursed who considers himself abject because of poverty or considers himself mighty because of wealth." It is said: "No rich person was more disgraced than that one in the assembly of Sufyan Thawri. (Sufyan) would not let him come up front and he was at the end of the line, while (Sufyan) had the poor man sit close to his person."

And Luqman said to his son: "O son, because someone wears an old garment, hold him not in contempt; for God Most High is thy God and his God." Yahya bin Mu'adh said: "Wretched son of Adam! If he had feared hell as he feared poverty, he would have been safe from both! If he had sought heaven as he sought the world, he would have attained both! And if he had feared God Most High in his heart as he feared people externally, he would have been fortunate in both places."

Someone brought 10,000 dirhams to Ibrahim Adham. He would not accept it. (The man) importuned much, (so) Ibrahim said: "Dost thou wish that with this sum I erase my name from the roll of the poor? I shall never do that!" And the Messenger (S) said to 'Ayishah: "If thou wishest to see me tomorrow,¹⁵²¹ live like a poor person. Avoid association with the rich, and do not cast off a tunic until thou hast patched it."

THE VIRTUE OF POVERTY AND CONTENTMENT

The Messenger (S) said: "Blessed is the person who has been led to Islam and who has been given self-sufficiency and is content with that." And he said to the poor: "Be content with poverty from within your souls so that ye may obtain the spiritual reward of poverty; if not, ye will not obtain it." This refers to the fact that there is no spiritual reward for the avaricious poor person, but there are explicit Traditions that (assert) that there is also spiritual reward for him. And he said: "There is a key for everything. The key to Paradise is friendship with the patient poor. On the Day of Resurrection, they will be the companions of God Most High." And he said: "The most beloved of the servants of God

¹⁵²¹ "tomorrow": that is, after death.

Most High is a poor person who is content with what he has and is satisfied with the sustenance which God Most High gives him." And he said: "Tomorrow on the Day of Resurrection there will be no poor person or rich person who will not wish that he had not obtained anything more than his daily food in the world."

God Most High sent a revelation to Ishmael: "Seek Me among the broken-hearted." (Ishmael) asked: "O Lord God, who are they?" (God) said: "Those sincere poor people." And said the Messenger (S): "On the Day of Resurrection, God Most High will say: 'Seek out My nobles and My saints from among mankind.' The angels will say: 'O Lord God, which ones are they?' He says: 'The Muslim poor who were content with My decree. Bring them all to Paradise!' They will enter Paradise, while all (others) will still be settling their accounts."

Abu Darda says: "There is no person whose intellect is not defective who would rejoice at an increase of the (things of the) world and would not be sorrowful while life is continually growing shorter. O glory be to God! What goodness is there in a world that increases while life is becoming less?" Someone passed by 'Amir bin 'Abd Qays and saw him eating bread and leeks. He said: "O 'Amir, art thou satisfied with that from the world?" He answered: "I know someone who is satisfied with less than this." (The man) asked: "Who is that?" ('Amir) said: "He who has accepted the world in exchange for the Hereafter is satisfied with less." One day, Abu Dharr Ghaffari was sitting and chatting with some people. His wife came to him and said: "Thou hast been sitting here while, by God, there is nothing in thy house!" He said: "Woman, there is a high obstacle before us and no one will pass over it, save those who travel lightly." His wife was pleased and returned (home).

EXCURSUS: [IS THE PATIENT POOR MAN MORE VIRTUOUS
OR THE GRATEFUL RICH MAN?]¹⁵²²

Know that there is a disagreement about whether the patient poor person or the grateful rich person is more virtuous. The correct view is that the patient poor person is more virtuous, and these Traditions are all evidence of this. However, if thou wantest to know the inner secret of affairs, the reality is that whatever prevents thee from the remembrance and love of God Most High is blameworthy. There is the person whose obstacle is poverty and there is the person whose obstacle is great wealth.

The explanation of this is that living according to one's (necessary) sustenance is preferable to (exceeding) it. For, this (necessary) amount is not for the world but for the provision of the way

¹⁵²² From the AA text.

of the Hereafter. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "O Lord, make the food of the family of Muhammad (the amount for their) sustenance." However, it is better that there not be anything in excess of that, because in greed and contentment both are equal, the poor man be greedy or the rich man be greedy. Both are attached to wealth, greedy for it and engrossed in it.

Moreover, the qualities of humanity are beaten down for the poor man because of the trouble he experiences and he becomes disgusted with the world. For the believer, the more his love for the world decreases, his love for God Most High increases. When the world has become his prison—even though he detests it, at the time of death his soul is less concerned with the world. For the rich man, since he has taken benefit from the world and has become habituated to it, his separation has become much more difficult for him. At the time of death, there is a great difference between those two souls. Indeed, the same is valid at the time of worship and conversation with God, because the pleasure that the poor man obtains is never obtained by the rich man. The remembrance of God of the rich man is with the tongue and the exterior of the soul. So long as his soul is not wounded or tired and not made sore with trouble and sorrow, the pleasure of remembrance will not enter the inner depths of his soul. In the same manner, if both are equal in contentment, the poor man is also superior.

However, if the poor person is greedy, while the rich person is grateful and satisfied, and if (the rich man) were to lose his wealth, he would not be particularly upset and would rise to give thanks for that, his soul is purified through gratitude and contentment. But the soul of the avaricious poor person becomes tainted with greed; however, it obtains purification with affliction, trouble, and sorrow. These fall close to each other and, in reality, one's distance and proximity to God Most High is according to his severance from and his attachment to the world.

Yet, if the rich person is thus, that the being or non-being of his wealth is the same to him and his soul is content with that, and he has that which he has for the needs of people—as 'Ayishah (R) spent one-hundred thousand dirhams in one day, but did not buy a dirham's worth of meat for herself to break her fast—this degree is better than the degree of poverty for the soul of him who does not possess this quality. However, if thou evaluatest the states against each other, the patient poor man is superior. For, most of the acts of the rich person are that he give charity and do good.

And in the Traditions, it is related: "The poor protested to the Messenger (S): "The rich have carried off the good of this world and the Hereafter because they give in charity, pay the poor rate, perform the Pilgrimage, and strive earnestly for the faith, while we cannot." The Messenger (S) treated the poor man who had been sent to him with

kindness and said: *'Welcome to thee who hast come from them. Thou hast come from a people whom I love. Tell them that whoever endures poverty patiently for the sake of God Most High has four qualities that a rich person shall never have: one is that in Paradise, (they shall have) palaces which will be seen by the inhabitants of Paradise as the inhabitants of the world see the stars. They are not other than the places of the prophets, the poor, and the martyrs. Another is that the poor will enter Paradise five hundred years sooner (than the rich). The third is that when a poor person says: Glory be to God and praise be to God and there is no god other than God and God is Greater (than all else) and a rich person says the same, the rich person will never achieve (the poor person's) degree, even though he give 10,000 dirhams as charity with that.'* Then the poor said: *"We are content! We are content! We are pleased! We are pleased!"* (The Prophet) said this because remembrance is a seed that, when it finds the soul free of the world and sorrowful and broken, has a great effect in (the soul). But, it bounces back as though from a hard stone from the soul of the rich person who is delighted by the world.

Therefore, since the degree of each one is according to the nearness of his soul to God Most High and his occupation with remembrance of God and his love, and that occupation is according to his freedom from intimacy with something else, and the rich person's soul is never devoid of this intimacy, when will they ever be equal? However, perhaps the rich man may suppose that while he is in the midst of wealth, he is free from it. This is a delusion. Its sign is that which was done by 'Ayishah (R) who spent all as though it were dust. If this would be easy and would be possible—possessing the world while being free of it, why did the prophets avoid (the world) so much and why did they command (against it)? Even the Messenger (S) would say: "Away from me! Away from me!" when the world caught his eye and displayed itself to him.

Jesus (A) says: "Do not look at the wealth of the worldly, for the gleam of its sweetness will drive faith out of your souls." He said this because that sweetness would appear in the soul and crowd out the remembrance of God, for two sweetnesses cannot convene in one soul. In existence, there are not more than two things: God and other-than-God. When thou hast set thy heart on other-than-God, to that degree, thou hast loosened thy ties to God. And to that degree which the ties have been loosened with other-than-God, one is nearer to God Most High. Abu Sulayman Darani says: "The sigh which comes from the soul of the poor man at the time of desire for something of which he is incapable is superior to a thousand years of a rich man's worship." Someone said to Bishr Hafi, may God have mercy upon him: "Offer a supplication for me because I have a family and I have nothing (for them)." He said: "At the time that thy family says there is no bread, there

is no water, and thou are helpless to provide them, and the pain of that surrounds thy soul, at that moment offer a supplication for me, for thy supplication at that time will be superior to mine."

THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR POVERTY

Know that the internal rule of conduct for poverty is satisfaction, and, externally, that one not complain. There are three states for internal poverty:

ONE is that one is joyful in one's poverty and thankful, for he knows that this is God Most High's dispensing of favor to His friends. *THE SECOND* is that if he is not grateful, he is not displeased by God Most High's act, even though he is displeased by poverty, such as a person who has his blood let dislikes the pain of that, but does not dislike the cupper. This, too, is great. *THE THIRD* is that he is dislikes God Most High for it. This is forbidden and nullifies the spiritual reward of poverty. Instead, it is necessary at all times to believe that God Most High does that which must be done and it does not behoove a person to dislike or reject that. Furthermore, externally, one must not complain and one should preserve the veil of patience.

'Ali (R) says: "There is the poor man who will be punished (in the Hereafter). The sign of that is a bad nature, complaint, and anger at the decree of God Most High. Or, perhaps, he will be amongst the people of (spiritual) happiness. The sign of that is a good nature, an absence of complaining, and uttering thanks." In the Traditions, it is related that the concealment of poverty is among the grand treasures.

Another rule of conduct is that one not mix with the rich, not humble oneself before them, and not flatter them. Sufyan says: "When a poor man attends the rich, know that he is a dissimulator; if he attends the ruler, he is a thief."

Another is that in certain circumstances, he should give charity, as much as he is able, and take it from his own (money). The Messenger (S) says: "There is a single dirham which takes precedence over a hundred thousand dirhams." They asked: "Where?" He said: "The man who has not more than two dirhams and gives away one. He is superior to the person who has much and gives a hundred thousand dirhams."

THE RULE OF CONDUCT FOR RECEIVING GIFTS

That is that one should not accept anything that is doubtful, nor should one accept more than is one's need, except when one is in the service of the poor. (In that case), one should accept it. If one accepts in public and gives in private, this is the degree of the truly righteous. If one does not have the strength to give oneself, let him tell the owner to

deliver it to a deserving person. However, it is important that the intention of the giver be expressed, as to whether it is as a gift, as charity, or as hypocrisy.

As for that which is given as a gift, accepting it is a Practice of the Prophet when it is devoid of obligation. If one knows that some (gifts) are devoid of obligation and some are not, one should not accept more than that in which there is no obligation. Someone brought the Messenger (S) oil, dried whey, and a sheep. He returned the sheep, but accepted the others. Someone brought fifty dirhams to Fath Mawsili. He said: "In the Traditions, it is related that whoever refuses something brought to him without his requesting it has refused God Most High." He took one dirham and left the rest. Hasan Basri related the same Tradition, but one day a man brought a purse of silver and many fine clothes to him. He did accept them, saying: "Whoever holds assemblies and accepts things from the people will not see God Most High on the Day of Resurrection, nor will he obtain any portion of it." He may have not accepted this because his intention from holding the assembly was spiritual reward. He knew that it was brought because of the assembly, and he did not want to nullify his integrity.

A friend gave someone something. (The latter) said: "Put it down and consider before I accept it whether the esteem for me in thy soul will be greater if I accept it." Sufyan Thawri would not accept anything and would say: "If I knew that he would not say *that*, I would accept it," *that* meaning boasting and placing one under obligation. There is the person who would accept from his close friends, but not from others, and all would avoid obligation. Bishr Hafi says: "I have never made a request from anyone except from Sari Saqati of whose asceticism I was certain and who would be pleased by giving away something."

However, if one gives with the intention of dissimulation, it is more important to refuse. One of the saints refused something and they criticized him. He said: "It was compassion that I showed them, for they would speak of it. The property would be lost (to them) and also the reward."

But if one gives it for the purpose of charity, if (the recipient) does not fit (the requirements of those deserving charity), he does not accept it. But if he is (qualified as) needy, it is not proper to refuse it. In the Traditions, it is related: "Whoever gives something to someone without his asking for it, (that gift) is some sustenance that God Most High has sent him." And it is said: "Whoever does not accept something given him becomes tried by that which he wants and is not given." Ahmad Hanbal would not accept anything whenever Sari Saqati sent it to him. (Sari) would say: "O Ahmad, beware of the blight of refusing." (Ahmad) said: "Say that again." (Sari) did so. (Ahmad) reflected and then said: "I have enough for a month. Keep that. When I have used up this, I shall accept it."

DISCLOSING THAT BEGGING WITHOUT NECESSITY IS FORBIDDEN

Know that the Messenger (S) has said: "Begging is an abomination and is not lawful except in necessity." The reason for its being an abomination is that there are three bad acts in it:

ONE is that expressing poverty is a complaint against God Most High. If someone's slave asks for something from another, he has defamed his master. The atonement for this is that one not beg except in case of necessity and not in the manner of a complaint.

ANOTHER is that one has degraded oneself, and it is not proper for a Muslim to humble himself before anyone other than God Most High. The deliverance from this is that, as much as possible, one should ask of his friends, relatives, the open-hearted, and the person who will not look upon him with contempt by reason of that request, and that he not become degraded. And, he should approach them, as far as he is able, only when necessary.

THE THIRD is that in it, there is the annoying of that (person approached). Perhaps, that which he gives will be out of shame or hypocrisy, because he fears censure. Consequently, if he gives, he will be upset and not give (the gift) from his heart. If he does not give, he may fall prey to the pain of shame and reproof. The way out of this is that one not ask plainly, but speak indirectly; so that should a person so desire, he may pretend not to have understood. If one speaks plainly, one should not specify (who the addressee is). One should speak to all. Perhaps a rich person may be present and (the one soliciting aid) know that he is liable for the poor rate. It is permissible, even if the man will be annoyed, (to solicit aid) from him when one is deserving to receive from the poor rate.

If there is a rich man and all are watching him and if he does not give, he will be criticized—this too is like singling someone out. However, it is permissible for one to make the request on behalf of someone else who is deserving of receiving from the poor rate, even though (the person being asked) is annoyed. The same is valid if one is deserving of the poor rate oneself. However, it is forbidden to accept that which is given out of fear of censure or shame, for that is like confiscation. They look at the external meaning of the words in a religious judgment, but this is useful (only) in this world. In the next world, they will rely upon the decree of the soul. When the soul testifies that he gave it with displeasure, it is forbidden.

Therefore, from all this it is evident that begging is forbidden, except out of necessity or for some important need. It is not proper that it be done for increasing opulence, eating well, or obtaining fine garments. It is appropriate for the person who is helpless, who possesses nothing and cannot earn any living. Or, though able to earn a living, he is busy acquiring knowledge and would be deprived of obtaining that (if he had to earn his livelihood).

However, if one engages in worship (instead of working), it is not proper to beg. Rather, earning is incumbent upon (such a person). Moreover, if one falls in need of food, but has a book which one does not need in one's house, or an extra prayer rug, or an extra (ragged) garment, or the like, begging is unlawful. One must first spend those.¹⁵²³ And, if a person begs in order to provide some luxury for his children or himself, it is forbidden. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever possesses something and begs will come on the Day of Resurrection as a skeleton with all of his flesh fallen away." And he (S) said: "Whoever begs but possesses is receiving the fire of hell, whether it be a little or a lot."

The Messenger (S) was asked: "How much must one have so that begging is not proper?" According to one Tradition, (he said): "Supper and breakfast."¹⁵²⁴ According to another Tradition, (he said): "Fifty dirhams." However, the fifty dirhams referred to are fifty silver dirhams or something of an equivalent value. For a single person, this would be the amount needed for one year's sustenance. If one does not have this amount and in that town it is established and customary that the time of giving the poor rate and the time of giving charity be one,¹⁵²⁵ if one does not beg, one would remain at a loss for the entire year, begging that amount is permissible. Moreover, supper and dinner are mentioned with respect to a person who is able to beg every day, because for him a day is like a year for the other person. This is with regard to the length of time.

As for the kinds of one's needs, they are basically three: bread, clothing, and shelter. The Messenger (S) said: "The son of Adam has no rights in the world save for three things: food so that his back may be straight, clothing to conceal his nakedness, and a home in which to live. That which is necessary of household goods for a home are also included in that term." And if one has a coarse felt cloak and a straw mat, it is not

¹⁵²³ "One must first spend those" (*kharj kardan*): that is, one must sell them for money or barter them for food.

¹⁵²⁴ "breakfast" (*chāsh*): actually a mid-morning meal. *Chāsh* is the median hour between dawn and noon. Where this meal is customary (usually in agricultural regions), the food taken upon rising at dawn is very light, and the *chāsh* meal much heavier, eaten as a break in the morning labors.

¹⁵²⁵ That is, both the poor rate (*zakāt*) and charity (*sadaqah*) are given at the same time and only once a year.

proper to beg for a coarse woolen blanket. If one has earthenware, it is not proper to beg for a ewer, and there is no limit to this, but one should not do this for something without any important need, for that is a grave sin.

EXCURSUS: [THE DEGREES OF THE POOR]

Know that there are different degrees of the poor. Bishr Hafi says that they are of three degrees: One is he who does not beg and, if given, does not accept. These people are, together with the spiritual, among the sublime. Another is he who does not beg, but, if given, accepts. These are with (God's) favorites in Paradise. The third is he begs, but begs out of necessity. He is among the Companions of the Right Hand.¹⁵²⁶

Ibrahim Adham, may God have mercy upon him, asked Shaqiq Balkhi, may God have mercy upon him: "How didst thou leave the poor in thy city?" He said: "In the best condition. If they obtain, they give thanks; if they do not obtain, they are patient." Ibrahim said: "I left the dogs of Balkh in the same condition." Shaqiq asked: "Then, how are thy poor?" (Ibrahim) replied: "So that if they do not obtain, they give thanks; and if they obtain, they bestow." (Shaqiq) kissed him on the forehead and said: "The reality is that."

Someone saw Abu al-Hasan Nuri begging with his hand held out. He was astonished and told Junayd. (Junayd) said: "Do not suppose that he was holding his hand out so as to beg from mankind. Rather, (he was begging) from God. He desires goodness and spiritual reward for them so that good may befall them. There is no harm to him (in this)." Then Junayd said: "Go and bring a scale." I went and brought one. He weighed a hundred dirhams and then poured a handful more of silver upon that amount. He said: "Take this to Nuri and give it to him." (The narrator) said: "I was astonished, because the weighing was to make known the amount, so why did he pour more upon that separately?" (The narrator) continued: "I took (the money) to Nuri. He requested a scale and, after weighing out one hundred dirhams, he said: 'Give this to him,' and he took the rest, saying: 'Yes, Junayd is a wise man. He wants to hold both ends of the rope.'" (The narrator) said: "I remained more astonished at this until I took it back to Junayd and told him what had happened. He said: '*God is He Who is called upon for help. That which was his, he took and that which was ours he returned.*' I asked what this was. He said: "The one hundred dirhams was for the spiritual reward of

¹⁵²⁶ "the Companions of the Right Hand" (*ashāb al-yamin*): This phrase is used several times in 56th Surah of The Holy Quran and once in the 74th Surah. The Companions of the Right Hand are those who will enter paradise, while the Companions of the Left Hand will enter hell.

the Hereafter and that which was extra was for God Most High. He accepted that which was for God and he returned that which we gave for ourselves." The poor in those days were thus. Consequently, their souls were pure so that they knew the each other's thoughts, without the translation of the tongue. If someone is not of this kind, at all events he should at least be in the hope of (being so). If this too is not present, at all events, he should believe in it.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF ASCETICISM AND ITS VIRTUE

Know that whoever has ice in the heat (of summer) is greedy for that so that when he is thirsty he may cool water with it. If someone comes and buys it for its weight in gold, the greed will depart because of his greed for the gold. He will say: "I shall endure drinking warm water for a day while the gold will stay with me all my life. It is better that I accept (the gold) rather than keep the ice. For, it will not last and will have melted by evening." His not desiring the ice when confronted with something better than that is called asceticism with respect to the ice. The state of the spiritually cognizant person in this world is the same, for he knows that the world is transitory, continually passing and melting. At the time of death it is finished. When he sees the Hereafter pure and eternal, which is never finished and is not sold except by abstaining from the world, in his view, the world becomes contemptible and he abstains from it in exchange for the Hereafter which is better. This state of his is called asceticism, with the condition that this abstemiousness is from the permissible things of the world, as it is itself (already) a religious obligation (to abstain) from the forbidden.

Moreover, the power to do so is a prerequisite. As for that of the world over which one has no control, asceticism is not relevant except insofar as when one is given something, one also does not accept it. But this cannot be known so long as it is not tried. For, when power appears, the self becomes changed into something else and the deceptions it gives alter. Another prerequisite is that one give away and not retain wealth, and that one relinquish rank as well. The absolute ascetic abandons the pleasures of the world and exchanges them from the pleasures of the Hereafter. This is a kind of transaction and a pledge, but in this sale, there is much profit, as God Most High said: *Lo! God has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs.* (Q. 9:111) Then, He said: *Rejoice, then, in the bargain that ye have made, for that is the supreme triumph.* (Q. 9:111) God Most High buys the bodies and wealth of the believers with Paradise. And He said: Blessed be this sale for you. Rejoice over this sale for ye get much profit from it.

Know that whoever abandons that world for the sake of showing generosity or for some other reason other than the quest for the Hereafter

is not an ascetic. And know that the selling of the world is a weak asceticism in the view of the spiritually insightful. Instead, the spiritually cognizant is one from before whom the Hereafter departs, just as the world does. For Paradise, too, is the portion of the appetite of the eye, stomach, and genitalia. Instead, he looks upon all of this with the eye of contempt and holds himself greater than that he be at the level of beasts and that which he shares of carnality with the beasts. He pays no attention to this. Rather, he desires nothing from the world or the Hereafter except God Most High, and he will not be satisfied except by spiritual knowledge and witnessing Him. All is contemptible in his sight except Him. This is the asceticism of the spiritually cognizant, and it is permissible for this person to be so that he does not flee from wealth or avoid it. Rather, he accepts it and puts it in its place and gives it to the deserving, just as 'Umar (R) who had all the wealth of the world at his disposal, was free from it in his soul, and just as 'Ayishah spent a hundred thousand dirhams in one day (on others) and did not leave a single dirham with which to break her fast.

So, it may be that a spiritually cognizant person has a hundred thousand dirhams at his disposal and he is (nonetheless) an ascetic, while there is another who does not have one dirham and is not an ascetic. Instead, perfection lies in this: that the soul be untied to the world. One is neither engaged in seeking it, nor in fleeing from it; one is neither at war with it, nor at peace; one neither loves it, nor is hostile to it. For, if a person is hostile to something, he is also occupied with it, just as the person who loves it. Perfection lies in that thou be liberated from all except God Most High. The wealth of the world must be to thee as the water of the sea, and thy hand like the treasury of God Most High. Thou art indifferent as to whether it is more or less, whether it comes or goes. Perfection is this. However, it is (also) the place of the delusion of fools, for whoever is not able to abandon worldly goods starts to delude himself by saying: "I am unencumbered by wealth." If he makes a distinction among the carrying off of his wealth by a deserving person, or its being carried off by seawater, or the carrying off of another's wealth, he is deluded and the compulsion for wealth is inside him. Consequently, the fundamental thing is that one should relinquish wealth and flee from it to escape its thrall.

Someone said to 'Abdullah Mubarak:¹⁵²⁷ "O Ascetic!" He replied: "An ascetic is 'Umar 'Abd al-'Aziz, for he has all the wealth of the world at his command and though he is powerful, he is abstemious. However, I who have nothing, how can my asceticism be correct?" Ibn

¹⁵²⁷ 'Abdullah Mubarak: Ibn al-Mubarak, see Note 660.

Abi Layla¹⁵²⁸ said to Ibn Sirin:¹⁵²⁹ "Dost thou see how that Abu Hanifah, the son of a weaver,¹⁵³⁰ rejects every decree of religious jurisprudence we issue?" (Ibn Sirin) replied: "I do not know whether he is a weaver's son or what he is, but I do know this: that the world has turned to him and he flees from that. He has turned away from us and we desire him."

Ibn Mas'ud said: "I did not know that there were people among us who loved the world until this verse was revealed: *Some of you desire the world and some of you desire the Hereafter*, (Q. 3:152) and this other verse: *And if We had decreed for them: Lay down your lives or go forth from your dwellings, but few of them would have done it.* (Q. 4:66) When the Muslims said: "If we had known in what lay the love of God Most High, we all would have done it." That verse was revealed at that time. Know that selling of ice for gold does not require much capital. All intelligent people know that the value of the world in comparison with the Hereafter is less, just as the value of ice is less than that of gold. Yet mankind is blind to this for three reasons: one is a weakness of faith, another is the immediate mastery of the appetites, and the third is putting off and procrastination and promising oneself: "After this, I shall do it." The most common reason is the mastery of the carnal appetites with which one cannot contend on the spot. One holds on to the cash (of this world) and forgets the credit (of the Hereafter).

THE VIRTUE OF ASCETICISM

Know that everything we have cited concerning the blame for the love of the world is evidence of this. Moreover, the love of the world is one of the Destroyers, while enmity for it is one of the Deliverers. Let us relate in this place some of the Traditions about enmity for (the world). The greatest praise for asceticism is that which has been attributed to the learned in the Quran. When Qarun¹⁵³¹ came out with his own entourage, adorned, the people would say: "Would that this were

¹⁵²⁸ Ibn Abi Layla: Ibn Abi Layla bin Shubramah. An authority on religious jurisprudence at the time of Abu Hanifah (see Note 400), he was given a government judgeship at Kufah by Caliph Mansur. Abu Hanifah criticized one of his decisions publicly, causing Ibn Abi Layla to complain to the governor who forbade Abu Hanifah to issue any religious legal opinions (*fatwā*). (Hussain)

¹⁵²⁹ Ibn Sirin: The text in *The Revival* and AA's Persian edition, following that, has Ibn Shubramah.

¹⁵³⁰ Abu Hanifah, see Note 400. The epithet "son of a weaver" is meant to be derogatory, as weavers were popularly held to be socially inferior, a prejudice unfortunately still alive in parts of the contemporary Islamic world.

¹⁵³¹ Qārūn: As proverbial for wealth in the Islamic world as Croesus is in the Western world. Qarun is usually identified with the Biblical Korah, whose story is told in *Numbers* 16. Qarun is referred to three times in the Quran: 40:25; 29:24-25; 28:76-82. In both versions, he opposed Moses and perished by being swallowed up by the earth.

mine!" But those who had been given knowledge said: *Woe unto you! The reward of God is better!* (Q. 29:80) Those who were learned said that the spiritual reward of the Hereafter is better than all of that. It is for this that it has been said that the eyes of wisdom become opened in the soul of whoever is an ascetic for forty days in the world. And the Messenger (S) said: "If thou desirest that God Most High love thee, become abstemious in this world." When Harithah¹⁵³² said to the Messenger (S): "I am truly a believer," (the Messenger) asked: "What is its sign?" (Harithah) answered: "This self of mine is become so horrified at the world that gold and stone are equal to me and thou wouldst say that I peer into heaven and hell." (The Messenger) said: "Preserve that well, for thou hast found what is necessary." Then he said: "This is a servant whose soul God Most High has illuminated: *A servant whose heart God has illuminated.*"¹⁵³³

When this verse was revealed: *And whomsoever it is God's will to guide, He expands his bosom unto the Surrender*, (Q. 6:125)¹⁵³⁴ (the Messenger) was asked: "O Messenger of God, what is this expansion?" He answered: "That one's soul become horrified at this habitation of delusion and turn to the habitation of the everlasting and that one begin before death to prepare the provisions for after death." And the Messenger (S) said: "Be modest before God Most High, as the modesty due before him." They said: "Are we not modest?" He answered: "Then, why do ye amass wealth ye will not be able to consume and why do ye build residences which will not be your (ultimate) residences?"

One day the Messenger (S) was giving a sermon and he said: "Whoever brings the creed *There is no god but God* (to the Hereafter) soundly, untainted by anything else—Paradise is his." 'Ali (R) rose and said: "O Messenger of God, explain what it is that must not be mixed with that." He replied: "Love for the world and the seeking of it, for there are persons whose speech is the speech of the prophets, but whose deeds are the deeds of the oppressors. Whoever brings *There is no god but God* untainted with that, his place is Paradise." And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever is an ascetic in the world, God Most High opens the gate of wisdom to his soul and his tongue becomes articulate with the utterance of that creed. The malady of the world and its medicine and remedy are shown to him, and it carries him safely from this world to the Abode of Peace." And the Messenger (S), in the company of his companions passed by a herd of camels in the middle of the desert. All of the camels were fine, fat, and pregnant. The most precious property of the Arabs is the camel because they get milk from them as well as meat. They

¹⁵³² Harithah: Harithah bin Suraqah bin al-Harith. He was martyred at the battle of Badr. AH2/624CE.

¹⁵³³ "A servant whose heart God has illuminated" ('abdun nawwara allāh qalbahu).

¹⁵³⁴ "the Surrender": Al-Islām.

transport burdens, and also give them wool and wealth. The Messenger (S) turned away and did not look at them. They said: "O Messenger of God, these are the wealth of the Arabs. Why dost thou not look upon them?" He said: "God Most High has forbidden me from looking upon them. He has said: *And strain not thine eyes toward that which We cause some wedded pairs among them to enjoy the flower of the life of the world.*" (Q. 20:131)

And they said to Jesus (A): "If thou commandest us to build a house, how long wouldst thou worship in it?" He said: "Go and build a house upon the water." They said: "How can a house be built upon water?" He said: "With the love of the world, how can one worship?" And our Messenger (S) said: "If thou desirest that God Most High love thee, give up the world. If thou desirest that men love thee, surrender (to them) that which they love."

Hafsah¹⁵³⁵ said to her father: "O father, if booty arrives from (conquered) towns, wear finer clothes and arrange for better food so that perhaps someone who is with thee would eat it." ('Umar) said: "No one knows the condition of the husband better than his wife. Thou knowest the condition of the Messenger (S) better than anyone. By God above thee, the Messenger had been on his mission and prophethood for several years. If he and his family were sated in the morning, they would be hungry at night. If they were sated at night, they would be hungry in the morning. By God above thee! He passed many years not eating his fill of dates, until the conquest of Khaybar. By God above thee! Thou knowest that when one day the food was placed upon a table, he became altered with dislike (of that) until he ordered that (the food) be placed upon the ground. By God above thee! Thou know that at night he would sleep upon a doubled coarse blanket.¹⁵³⁶ Once, it was folded into four layers so that it would be softer. He said: 'The blanket in four layers was softer last night, but it kept me from performing the night formal prayer.'¹⁵³⁷ He said: 'Do not make it more than two thicknesses, as it used to be.' By God above thee! Thou knowest that when his garment would be washed and Bilal would cry the summons to the pre-dawn prayer, the garment would not be dry and he would not be able to come out because he had no other garment. By God above thee! Thou knowest that a woman of the Bani Zafar¹⁵³⁸ was weaving a wrapper and a cloak for him. Before

¹⁵³⁵ Hafṣah: the daughter of 'Umar and a wife of the Prophet. The widow of an early convert to Islam, she had considerable influence in his counsels. Her father, 'Umar, became the second caliph of Islam (rgd. AH13/634CE to AH23/644CE).

¹⁵³⁶ "a doubled coarse blanket (*gilīm*)": that is folded once so that it had two layers of thickness.

¹⁵³⁷ That is: because of the softness, he slept so soundly that he did not wake up to perform the prayer.

¹⁵³⁸ Banī Zafar: other mss. have Banī Nudayr. Both are names of Arab tribes of the period.

both were finished, she sent one. The Messenger (S) came outside holding that behind and knotted in the front: he had nothing more than that (to wear)." Hafsa said: "I know all of that." Then, they wept, 'Umar and Hafsa, until they swooned. Then, he said: "Two of my friends have gone before me: that is, Muhammad and Abu Bakr. They were traveling a path. If I travel their path, I shall reach them; if not, I will be taken another way. I follow their hard lives and I am patient so that I may attain that life of eternal comfort together with them."

Some of the Companions said to the first of the Followers: "Your worship is more than the worship of the Companions, but they were better than you, because they were more abstemious in the world." 'Umar said: "Abstaining from the world is both the ease of the soul and the ease of the body." Ibn Mas'ud says: "Two bows of formal prayer by an ascetic in the world are superior to the worship of all the qualified legalists to the end of their lives." Sahl Tustari says: "Thou canst act sincerely when thou dost not fear four things: hunger, nakedness, poverty, and contempt.

DISCLOSING THE DEGREES OF ASCETICISM

Know that for the ascetic there are three degrees:

ONE is that he retains the world and his soul looks upon it; but he strives earnestly and is patient. He is called "devout,"¹⁵³⁹ not "ascetic." This is the beginning of asceticism.

THE SECOND is that soul does not look upon the world, but looks upon asceticism and one knows oneself that asceticism is his task. This is an ascetic, but not without deficiency.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one is an ascetic in his asceticism, too. That is, he does not see his own asceticism and he does not consider it a task. He is like the person who intends to go the residence of a king in order to become his minister. A dog at the entrance of the palace blocks his way. He throws a piece of bread to the dog so that it will turn from him to that. Then, he enters the residence of the king and becomes a minister. The whole world is a morsel of food and Satan is the dog at the court of the King of eighteen thousand worlds. He keeps barking. When thou throwest something to him, he turns away from thee. The whole world, in comparison with the Hereafter, is more insignificant than a piece of bread for a viziership; for the Hereafter has no limit. There is no affinity between the finite and the infinite. It was for this that when Abu Yazid¹⁵⁴⁰ was told: "So-and-so speaks about asceticism." He asked:

¹⁵³⁹ "devout" (*mutazahhid*): or, "one who would be an ascetic."

¹⁵⁴⁰ Abū Yazīd: the same as Bayazid (see Note 1327).

"Asceticism with regard to what?" They said: "The world." He said: "There is nothing in the world that anyone may be an ascetic about. First, there must be something concerning which one may become an ascetic."

AS FOR THE DEGREES OF ASCETICISM with respect to that for which there is asceticism, they are three:

ONE is that one becomes an ascetic only to escape the torment of the Hereafter. If one is carried off to nothingness, it is permissible. This is the asceticism of the fearful. One day, Malik Dinar said: "Last night I was very audacious with God Most High: I asked Him for Paradise."

THE SECOND is that it is for the spiritual reward of the Hereafter. This is more complete, for this asceticism is with hope and love. This is the asceticism of the hopeful.

THE THIRD—and this is perfection—is that there be in one's soul neither the fear of hell, nor the hope for Paradise. Rather, the love for God Most High itself expels the love for the world and Hereafter from one's soul. One is ashamed to pay attention to anything except Him. As Rabi'ah used to say when talking about Paradise: "*The neighbor, then the house.*" That is, the master of the house is better than the house. In the view of the person in whom the pleasure of the love for God Most High has appeared, the pleasures of Paradise are like the pleasure of the children's playing with sparrows in comparison with the pleasure of kingship. Perhaps, the child prefers that play to being a king, for he has no knowledge of the pleasure of rule itself, as he is still immature. He for whom a desire remains other than the witnessing of the Divine Presence is still immature and has not achieved puberty. He has not achieved the degree of manhood.

As for the degrees of asceticism with respect to that which one abandons, there are differences of opinion. There is the person who abstains from some part of the world. The perfection of that is that he abandon all that has delight for himself in which there is neither necessity nor need on the way of the Hereafter. For, the world is composed of the pleasures of the self from property, rank, eating, wearing, speaking, sleeping, association with people, learning, assemblies, telling stories—everything that is for the delight of the self is from the world, except that which is used to call (people) to God.

Abu Sulayman Darani says: "I have heard many words about asceticism, but in our opinion it is that thou abandon whatever distracts thee from God Most High." He said: "Whoever has busied himself with marriage, travel, and writing Traditions has turned to the world." He was asked: "What is '*Save him who brings to God a sound heart*'?" (Q. 26:89) He replied: "A sound heart is that in which there is nothing except God Most High." John the son of Zechariah (A) would wear sackcloth so

that the softness of a garment had no comfort for his body, as that was one of the delights of the self. Then, his mother begged him to wear woolen clothes because his skin had been rubbed raw by the sackcloth. [He put on (the woolen garment).]¹⁵⁴¹ Revelation came to him: "O John! Thou hast chosen the world over Me!" He wept and put the sackcloth back on.

Know that this is the extreme of asceticism and a person may not reach that degree; but the degree of each person is in accordance with the amount (of the world) he has abandoned. Just as repentance for some sins is correct, so too asceticism in some things is correct. That is, it is not without spiritual reward and usefulness.¹⁵⁴² However, that station which is promised the repenter and the ascetic in the Hereafter is for those who abstain from all.

DISCLOSING THE DETAILS OF THAT WITH WHICH THE ASCETIC MUST BE CONTENT IN THE WORLD

Know that mankind has fallen into the chasm of the world, and there is no limit to the valleys of the world. But six things are necessary in the world: foodstuffs, clothing, shelter, household utensils, women, wealth, and rank:

THE FIRST NECESSITY is food. It is evaluated as to kind, amount, and the sauce.¹⁵⁴³

As for the kind: the least¹⁵⁴⁴ thing which gives nourishment, even if it is all chaff. The median is barley bread and bread made from millet. The best is bread of unsifted wheat. If it is sifted, it is beyond the limit of asceticism and has become luxury.

As for the amount: the least is ten *sitirs*.¹⁵⁴⁵ The median is half a *mann*¹⁵⁴⁶ and the most is a *mudd*.¹⁵⁴⁷ This is the amount that is the right of the poor. More than this causes a loss of the asceticism of the stomach.

¹⁵⁴¹ From the AA text.

¹⁵⁴² Even if one does not repent for all sins, repenting from some is correct and a good step. So too, if one cannot abstain from everything in the world, but does abstain from some things, then, there is spiritual merit in that limited asceticism. Something is better than nothing.

¹⁵⁴³ "sauce" (*nān-khwurash*): Literally, "that which is eaten with bread" usually a meat or fish dish. Most often this takes the form of a stew.

¹⁵⁴⁴ In this passage, the "least" refers to the greatest degree of asceticism with regard to the item of necessity, the "best" or "highest" is the least degree of asceticism while still remaining what is properly called asceticism. Better than that nullifies asceticism.

¹⁵⁴⁵ *sitir*: A measure of weight. Steingass gives it a value of 6.5 drachmas: a fortieth part of a *mann*. *Farhang-i-'Amid* also give is a value of a fortieth part of a *mann*, equal to 16 *mithqals*.

As for keeping (foodstuffs) for the future, the highest degree is that one should not retain anything other than what is needed to prevent hunger, for a principle of asceticism is the brevity of hope. The median of that is that one keeps for a month or for forty days. The lowest degree of that is keeping (foodstuffs sufficient for) a year. If one keeps (foodstuffs) for more than a year, one is deprived asceticism, because whoever has the hope of living beyond a year is not properly an ascetic. The Messenger (S) used to store enough for his family for a year, as they did not have strength to endure (less). However, he would not keep anything over night for himself.

As for the sauce, the least is vinegar and leeks. The median is oil and that which is made with that. The best is meat: if one eats it continually, asceticism is gone. If one does not eat it more than once or twice a week, one does not fall completely out of the degree of asceticism.

As for the time of eating, one must not eat more than once a day: is better if one eats once every two days. However, if one eats twice in one day, this is not asceticism.

Whoever desires to comprehend asceticism must learn the states of the Messenger (S) and the Companions. 'Ayishah (R) says: "There were times when there was no lamp in the house of the Messenger for forty days, and there was no food except dates and water." Jesus (A) said: "For whoever seeks Paradise, there is much eating of barley bread and sleeping on dung heaps with dogs." And he used to say: "O disciples, eat barley bread and do not crowd about wheat, for one cannot rise to the gratitude for that."

THE SECOND NECESSITY is clothing. The ascetic must not have more than one (set of) clothing. When he washes it, he remains naked. If there are two, he is not an ascetic. The least is a cap, a tunic, and footgear. Usually, with these there are a turban and drawers.¹⁵⁴⁸

As for the kind: the least is sackcloth, the median is coarse wool, and the highest is coarse cotton. If it soft and fine, then asceticism has departed. At the time that the Messenger¹⁵⁴⁹ (S) received the command. 'Ayishah (R) brought a coarse cloak and a coarse wrapper and said: "These were his clothes and nothing more."

¹⁵⁴⁶ *mann*: Steingass gives it a weight of 40 *ser*s, a *ser* equaling a *sitir*. In Arabic it is the weight of two *ritls*.

¹⁵⁴⁷ *mudd*: A dry measure equal to two *ritls* or one and a third *ritls*. As much as a full grown man can hold in both hands. (Steingass)

¹⁵⁴⁸ "drawers" (*izār-i pāy*): these are the loose pajama-like pants or drawers still favored in many regions of the Islamic world. The word "pajama" derives from the Persian *pāty-jāmah*, literally: "the clothing of the feet or legs." They are normally held up with a drawstring around the waist, but an elastic band is often used these days.

¹⁵⁴⁹ "received the command": died.

In the Traditions, it is related: "No person dons the clothing of sensuality¹⁵⁵⁰ but that God Most High averts Himself from him, even if He loves him, until he takes them off." The cost of the two garments of the Messenger (S)—the breeches and the cloak—was not more than 15 dirhams. There were times when his clothing was so crusted that one would have said that it was the clothing of an oil-presser. Once, he was brought patterned clothing as a gift. He put it on, then took it off, saying: "Take this to Abu Jahm¹⁵⁵¹ and bring his coarse cloak. The decoration on this distracts my eyes." One time, he renewed his sandal¹⁵⁵² straps. His eye fell upon them during formal prayer. He said: "Bring back the old straps; I do not want these new ones because they distract my eyes." And on the pulpit he took off a ring and threw it down when he noticed it once, saying: "A glance at that and a glance at you."¹⁵⁵³ Once, he was brought a new pair of fine footwear. He prostrated himself to God Most High and came outside. He gave them to the first poor person he saw and said: "They pleased me and I feared that God Most High would hold me in enmity for that reason. That was why I prostrated myself."

'Ayishah (R) said that the Messenger had said: "If thou desirest to comprehend me, be satisfied with that much of the world as is the provision for a traveler. Do not take off a tunic so long as thou hast not patched it." They counted fourteen patches that 'Umar (R) had made on his clothes. 'Ali (R), during the time of his caliphate, bought a tunic for three dirhams and he tore off all of the sleeve beyond the wrist. He said: "Thanks be to the Lord Whose robe of honor this is." Someone has said: "I valued all of the clothing that Sufyan Thawri wore, with his sandals. They were not worth more than a dirham and two thirds."¹⁵⁵⁴ In the Traditions, it is related: "Whoever is able to be ostentatious in clothing but is humble for the sake of God and restrains himself from display, has a right that God Most High exchanges for him for splendid celestial garments of silk upon thrones of rubies."

'Ali (R) said: "God Most High has struck a covenant with the leaders of guidance that their garments be the least of mankind so the

¹⁵⁵⁰ "the clothing of sensuality" (*jāmah-yi shahwat*): that is, luxurious clothing.

¹⁵⁵¹ Abu Jahm: possibly the Abū al-Jahm Al-ʿAdawī mentioned by Ibn Khallikan as having sold his house for a hundred thousand dirhams in his essay concerning Abu al-Aswad al-Duʿali (d. AH69/688-9CE). This would make him a probable contemporary of the Prophet.

¹⁵⁵² "sandal(s)": The word used here, *naʿlayn*, is the Arabic dual of *naʿl*, which usually means "horseshoe." In the dual, it is used to refer a variety of human footgear—slippers, clogs, sandals etc., and it so used in Persian. Today, it usually refers to the slippers worn by mullahs.

¹⁵⁵³ that is, he was looking back and forth, from the ring to the people and back to the ring, and so forth.

¹⁵⁵⁴ "a dirham and two thirds" (*diramī wa chahār dāng*): Literally, a dirham and four sixths. A *dāng* is a sixth of anything.

rich may emulate them and the poor not become dejected." Fadalāh bin 'Ubayd¹⁵⁵⁵ was the commander of Egypt. He was seen walking barefooted wearing the meanest clothing. They said to him: "Thou art the commander of a land! Do not do thus!" He said: "Our Messenger (S) prohibited us from luxury and commanded that we go about barefooted from time to time." Muhammad bin Wasi¹⁵⁵⁶ went to Qutaybah bin Muslim¹⁵⁵⁷ wearing woolen clothes.¹⁵⁵⁸ (Qutaybah) asked him: "Why hast thou put on wool?" (Muhammad) remained silent. (Qutaybah) said: "Why dost thou not answer?" (Muhammad) replied: "I do not wish to say because of asceticism and thereby indulge in self-praise. Or (to say) out of poverty, for then I would have complained against God Most High."

Solomon (A) was asked: "Why dost thou not wear fine clothing?" He replied: "What has a slave of God to do with fine clothes? When I am freed tomorrow, there will be no lack of fine clothing."¹⁵⁵⁹ Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz had a sackcloth (garment) which he put on at night and performed formal prayer. He did not put it on during the day, lest the people see it. Hasan Basri said to Farqad al-Sanji:¹⁵⁶⁰ "Dost thou suppose that thou hast some superiority over others because of that coarse cloth thou hast put on? I have heard that most of the inhabitants of hell are wearers of coarse cloth."

THE THIRD NECESSITY is shelter. The lowest of this is reserved (for those) who have no home and who are content with a corner of the mosque or some retreat. The most is that one have a room he owns or

¹⁵⁵⁵ Fadalāh bin 'Ubayd: Fadalāh bin al-Ansārī. He was a native of Madinah who converted to Islam (hence the epithet *al-Ansārī*). Active in the military enterprises of early Islam, besides being in Egypt he also took part in the attack on Cyprus under the Umayyad caliph Mu'awiyah (rgd. AH41/661CE to AH60/680CE).

¹⁵⁵⁶ Muhammad bin Wasi^c: Abu Bakr Basri. He was a soldier who became an ascetic and a Traditionist. He died in AH121/738CE.

¹⁵⁵⁷ Qutaybah bin Muslim was born about AH50/670CE. He became the governor of Khorasan (northeastern present-day Iran) in AH85/704CE and conquered Kharazm (parts of present-day Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and northern Afghanistan) in AH94/712CE. He died AH96/715CE.

¹⁵⁵⁸ Wearing coarse wool was the sign of Sufism, the word "Sufism" probably being derived from their custom of wearing woolen garments. It was also cheaper than fine linen or cotton.

¹⁵⁵⁹ This story ascribing asceticism to Solomon is in sharp contrast to the Biblical narrative where his splendid apparel and court are described in considerable detail. See I Kgs: 4-10. Another version of the same occurs in II Ch: 1-9. In the time of Jesus, Solomon's wealth and opulence had become proverbial: "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." (Matthew 6:28-29)

¹⁵⁶⁰ Farqad al-Sanji (or al-Sinji): a mystic and disciple of Hasan al-Basri. Farqad died in AH131/748-9CE. Both HK and AA have *Sabkhi*, but I follow *The Fihrist* in this. Again the difference is the place of a single dot.

rents according to his need. It is not high, nor is it decorated, and does not exceed one's need. If the ceiling is more than six cubits¹⁵⁶¹ high and plastered, it exceeds (the limits) of asceticism. In short, the purpose of shelter is to keep one from cold, heat, rain, and wind. One should not look for (anything) except this.

It has been said that the first thing which appeared of lengthening hopes after the Messenger (S) was construction with plaster and doubling the hems of clothing, for in (the Prophet's) age there was but a single hem. 'Abbas (R) constructed a high window. The Messenger (S) ordered that it be removed. One day, he passed by a high dome. The Messenger (S) asked: "Whose is that?" They said: "So-and-so's." After that, that person came to the Messenger (S). He did not look at him until that person asked the reason for that. They told him. He went away and destroyed the dome and the Messenger's (S) heart was pleased by that and he supplicated (God) on his behalf. Hasan (R) says: "The Messenger (S) did not place one brick upon another or one timber upon another during his entire lifetime." And the Messenger (S) said: "For whomever God Most High desires the bad, He destroys his wealth in water and earth."¹⁵⁶²

'Abdullah (bin) 'Umar (R) says: "The Messenger (S) passed by us. He asked: 'What is this that ye are doing?' We said: 'It is a house the reeds of which have rotted. We are repairing it.' He said: 'There is an affair closer to hand than that which takes time; that is, death.'" And the Messenger (S) said: "Whoever builds more than is necessary will be tasked on the Day of Resurrection to lift it up." Noah (A) built a house of reeds. They said: "What would it matter if it were of wood and sun-baked brick?" He said: "This is plenty for a person who must die." And the Messenger (S) said: "Whatever house a servant of God builds will have evil consequences on the Day of Resurrection, except for that which protects him from the heat and the cold."

'Umar saw a villa on the road to Syria built of burnt brick. He said: "I never knew that in this nation they build that which Haman¹⁵⁶³ built for Pharaoh," meaning (Pharaoh's) burnt bricks.¹⁵⁶⁴ (Pharaoh) said: "Kindle fire for me, O Haman, to bake the mud." (Q. 28:38) And in the Traditions, it is related: "When a servant of God builds higher than six cubits, an angel cries from heaven, saying: 'O most corrupt of the corrupt! Where art thou coming?'" That is: "Thou shouldst go down into

¹⁵⁶¹ Approximately 9 or 10 feet.

¹⁵⁶² "water and earth": the materials commonly used for construction in that period.

¹⁵⁶³ Hāmān: the prime minister of Pharaoh mentioned in Q. 28:7; 29:38; and 40:38. His identity is discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and the volume extracted from that, *Moses*.

¹⁵⁶⁴ In Exodus 5:5-21 Pharaoh orders that the captive Hebrews be assigned the task of making bricks.

the earth in a grave. How darest thou to come towards heaven?" Hasan Basri (R) says: "In the rooms of the Messenger (S), one's hand would reach the ceiling." Fudayl says: "I am not astonished by a person who builds and leaves it. Rather, I am astonished by the one that sees (an abandoned building) and does not learn the lesson."

THE FOURTH NECESSITY is the household equipment. The highest degree of this is that of Jesus (A) who possessed nothing except a comb and a jug. He saw someone combing his beard and mustache with his fingers and he threw away the comb. He saw someone drinking water with his hand, and he threw away the jug. The farthest degree of this is that one have one of each necessary thing made of wood or pottery. If they are made of bronze or brass, they are not (within the limits) of asceticism. The forefathers endeavored to apply a single article to many tasks.

The Messenger (S) had a leathern pillow stuffed palm fiber. His carpet was of coarse fabric, folded over into two thicknesses. One day 'Umar saw the marks left by a date-fiber mat on (the Messenger's) side and he wept. (The Messenger) asked: "Why dost thou weep, O 'Umar?" ('Umar) said: "Caesar and Chosroes, the enemies of God, are in those comforts, while thou, the Messenger of God and the friend of God, art in these straits!" (The Messenger) said: "O 'Umar, art thou not pleased that their comforts are of the world and ours are of the Hereafter?" ('Umar) answered: "I am." Then (the Messenger) said: "Therefore know that it is thus."

Someone entered the home of Abu Dharr (R). In the entire house, there was nothing. He said: "Dost thou not have anything in thy house?" (Abu Dharr) answered: "I have a house to which I send everything that I receive," that is, the next world. (The visitor) said: "As long as thou art in this stopping place, there is no escaping (the need) for goods." (Abu Dharr) replied: "God will not place our stopping place here."

When 'Umayr bin Sa'd,¹⁵⁶⁵ the commander of Hims, went to 'Umar, ('Umar) asked: "What dost thou have of the world?" ('Umayr) answered: "I have a staff upon which I support myself and with which I kill snakes. I have a leathern bag in which I put food. I have a bowl from which I eat food and in which I wash my head and clothing. I have a ewer from which I drink water and purify myself; for, everything else of the world is subordinate to that which I have."

The Messenger (S) returned from a journey and went to the door of the house of Fatimah (R). He saw a curtain on the doorway and two silver rings on her hand. He turned back from within the house out of

The ¹⁵⁶⁵ 'Umayr bin Sa'd: the son of a reciter (of the Quran) and a Companion. An abstemious man of integrity, 'Umar bin Khattab appointed him governor of Hims in central Syria.

displeasure. When Fatimah learned the cause of his displeasure, she sold the two rings for one and a half dirhams and gave the money together with the curtain away in charity. Then, the Messenger (S) was pleased with her and said: "Thou hast done well." There was also a curtain at the door of the quarters of 'Ayishah. The Messenger (S) said: "Whenever my eye falls on that, I remember the world. Take it down and give it to so-and-so." And 'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) used to sleep on a folded coarse blanket. One night, I spread a soft rug for him. He spent the night twisting and turning. The next day he said: "I was not able to sleep last night. Bring back that coarse blanket."

Once, gold was brought and (the Messenger) divided it (amongst the Muslims). At night, no more than six dinars were left. He did not sleep that night, until late in the evening, he also sent that money to a person, and then he slept soundly. Then, he said: "What would be my condition if I had died and those six dinars had remained with me?" Hasan Basri says: "I have come to know seventy of the Companions of the Messenger. No one amongst them had a garment other than that which he was wearing. They never placed a veil between themselves and the earth.¹⁵⁶⁶ They used to lay their sides on the earth when going to sleep and threw that garment over themselves."

THE FIFTH NECESSITY is marriage. Sahl Tustari and Sufyan 'Uyaynah¹⁵⁶⁷ (R) and others have said that there is no asceticism in marriage. But the most ascetic of mankind was the Messenger (S) and he loved women and had nine wives. 'Ali (R), with his asceticism, had four wives and ten concubines. Know from this that on the path of asceticism it is not intended that it be permissible for a person to withhold from marriage in order not to have pleasure and (sexual) intercourse. Marriage is for children and there is much benefit in that and the continuance of generations. It is as though one were not to eat or drink at all in order not to have the pleasure of those and (then) perish because of this while his descendants are cut off. However, if marriage distracts a person from God Most High, not marrying is better. If the carnal appetite overcomes, it is (an act of) asceticism to seek a woman who is not beautiful. For, that quiets passion instead of exciting it. Ahmad Hanbal (R) was given a beautiful woman. They told him that she had a sister who was more intelligent, but had only one eye. He asked for the more intelligent one. Junayd says: "I prefer that a disciple guard his heart against three things: earning, marriage, and recording Traditions." And he says: "I do not like that a Sufi recite or write, for thought becomes fragmented and does not coalesce."

¹⁵⁶⁶ That is, they slept on the bare ground.

¹⁵⁶⁷ Sufyan 'Uyaynah: See Note 990.

THE SIXTH NECESSITY is wealth and rank. We have discussed these in the Pillar of the Destroyers, for both are fatal poisons. A little of them, in accordance with need, is a medicine and not worldliness. Indeed, all that is necessary for religion is also from religion. Khalil¹⁵⁶⁸ (A) asked a friend for a loan. A revelation came: "Why didst thou not ask for it from thine own Friend?" He answered: "O Lord God, I knew that Thou dost hold the world in enmity and I feared to ask for something of the world from Thee." (God) said: "Whatever is needed (to satisfy basic wants) is not (counted as) worldliness."

In short, when one has abandoned appetites and excesses and is content with a necessary amount of wealth and rank, one's soul is liberated and does not love the world. The point is that when one goes to the next world, he will not bow his head in shame, nor turn backwards to look (longingly) at this world. The person looks back whose place of ease and tranquillity is this world. However, with respect to him (who has abandoned appetites and excess), it is like a lavatory that he does not desire except at the time of need. Since he is freed from this need at death, why should he turn back to it?

But as for the person who has tied his soul to this world, he is like the person at a place from which he does not want to leave. He binds chains from there securely around his own neck, and he even ties the hairs of his head firmly to that place so that when they raise him from it, he remains suspended by his own hair. So long as all of his hairs are not pulled out by the roots, he will not escape from that and then the scars will remain on him. Hasan Basri says: "I have learned of a people who are more delighted with calamity than ye are with comfort. If they were to see you, they would say: 'They are nothing other than devils.' If ye were to see them, ye would say: 'They are nothing other than madmen.' These people used to delight in calamity, so that their souls would arise and be liberated from the world, so that at the time of death they would not be attached to anything."

¹⁵⁶⁸ *Khalil* (friend), an epithet for Abraham. The full version is Khalil Allāh (the friend of God).

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCERNING INTENTION, TRUTHFULNESS, AND SINCERITY

Know that it has been disclosed to the circumspect that all mankind have been ruined save the worshippers; and all the worshippers are lost save the learned; and all the learned are lost save the implementers; and all the implementers are lost save the sincere; and the sincere are in great danger. Therefore, without sincerity, all pains taken are lost. Moreover, sincerity and truthfulness do not exist except in the Intention. How can a person, who does not know keep, sincerity in (the intention)? Let us discuss the meaning of the Intention in one part, the meaning of the true nature of Sincerity in another part, and the true nature of Truthfulness in a third part.¹⁵⁶⁹

PART ONE: CONCERNING INTENTION

First, one must learn the virtue of the Intention, for the spirit of all works is the Intention. The judgment (of the act) belongs to that, and God Most High looks from the deed to the intention. It is for this that the Messenger (S) said: "God Most High does not look at your outward appearance and qualities; He looks at your heart¹⁵⁷⁰ and deeds." (His) looking at the heart is because it is the locus of intention. And the Messenger (S) said: "Deeds are according to intention. Every person receives from his act of worship that which is his intention for that. Whoever emigrates, that is, who leaves his own town to fight in defense of Islam or to perform the Greater Pilgrimage for the sake of God Most High, his emigration is for the sake of God Most High. Whoever does this in order to obtain some wealth or to marry some woman, his emigration is not for the sake of God Most High. It is for that which he seeks." And he said: "Most of the martyrs of my people die on beds and pillows. Many are killed between two ranks, whose intention God Most High knows better."¹⁵⁷¹ And he said: "A servant of God does many good deeds and the angels carry (the deeds) up (to God). God Most High says: 'Expunge that from his record, for he did not do it for Me, but write down such-and-such of his deeds.' They say: 'O Lord God! He has not done that!' (God) says: 'But he had formed the intention to do so.'" And (the Messenger) said: "There are four kinds of people: One has wealth

¹⁵⁶⁹ Though the chapter title reverses the second and third topics, this is the order in which Ghazzali actually discusses them.

¹⁵⁷⁰ "heart" (*dil*); or, "soul."

¹⁵⁷¹ "Many are killed...knows better." That is, many die in battle between the defenders of Islam and their opponents, but only God knows the purity of their intentions: were they fighting solely for Islam, or did the hope of obtaining booty play a part?

and spends it wisely. Another says: 'If I had it, I would do the same.' The reward for both is the same. Another has wealth, but does not use it according to the rule of expenditure, and another says to himself: 'If I had it, I would do the same.' Both are equal in offending and sin. That is, the intention by itself is just like doing it as well."

Anas says: "One day during the Tabuk expedition, the Messenger (S) came out and said: 'In Madinah, there are many people who are our partners in the reward and hardships of travel and the hunger that we endure.' We said: 'Why, when they are not with us?' He said: 'They have stayed back excused, but their intention is the same as ours.'" During a drought, one of the Children of Israel came upon a mountain of sand. He said: "If this had been all wheat, I would have given it all to the poor." Revelation came to the messenger of that era that he should say to that person: "God Most High has accepted thy charity and has given thee as much spiritual reward as if thou hadst had all that wheat and had given it away in charity."

The Messenger (S) said: "There is always poverty before the two eyes of him whose intention and ambition are the world, and he leaves the world as a lover of the world. God Most High keeps the soul of him whose intention and ambition are for the Hereafter rich. He leaves the world and he is an ascetic in it." And the Messenger said: "When the Muslims stand in ranks against the unbelievers, angels begin to write on scrolls: 'So-and-so fights zealously; so-and-so fights with ardor.' Ye say that so-and-so was killed in the way of God Most High. Whoever fights so that the creed of Unity will prevail is on the path of God Most High." And he said: "Whoever marries with the intention of not paying the dowry¹⁵⁷² is an adulterer. Whoever borrows money with the intention of not repaying it is a thief."

Know that the learned religious scholars have said: "First learn the intention of the deed; then, the deed." Someone said: "Teach me an act that I may be engaged with night and day so that I not be devoid of good at any time." They said: "If thou canst not perform a good deed, then continually form good intentions so that the spiritual reward of that (unperformed deed) may be obtained." Abu Hurayrah said: "Mankind will be assembled on the Day of Resurrection according to their intentions." Hasan Basri says: "Eternal Paradise without end is not with the acts of these few days (of life on earth). Rather, it is with good intentions, for there is no end to (good) intentions."

¹⁵⁷² "dowry" (*kābīn*): In Islamic law, the dowry is given by the husband to the wife, not the reverse, as was (and still is in many places) the European custom.

THE TRUE NATURE OF INTENTION

Know that a human being does not act so long as he does not have three things: (in Arabic) knowledge, desire, and power; that is (in Persian), knowledge, desire, and power.¹⁵⁷³ For example, if one does not see food, one does not eat. If one sees it, but if there is no need (to eat) or desire (for food), one also does not eat. And, if there is desire but the hand is paralyzed, unable to perform work, one also does not eat, for one does not have the power. Therefore, these three things precede all acts. But action is subservient to power, and power is subservient to desire and will, for compulsion compels power to act. However, need is not subservient to knowledge, for one sees many things and does not desire them. Moreover, without knowledge, desire does not form either; for, why would one desire something one does not know? Intention is composed of all three: of desire, of power, and of knowledge. Desire is what prompts it and sets it to work. That is also called motive, purpose, and intention. All three have one meaning.

Thus, the motivation that has prompted one to act is sometimes one and sometimes two motives that have joined in one thing.

That which is "one" is called "pure." It is like the person who has been sitting down. A lion makes for him. He jumps up and runs away. His intention and his motivation are nothing more than one, and that is flight. In the same way, when some dignitary enters through a door, a person stands up for him. There is no motivation other than to show him honor. This is pure.

As for the motivation being twofold, there are three types:

ONE is that each motivation be thus: If it were single it would impel him to act, as when a poor relative requests a dirham one gives it to him (both) for his kinship and his poverty. (The donor) knows from his own heart that if (the requester) were not poor, he would have given it anyway (because of kinship); and if (the requester) were poor but not a relative, he would also have given it (because of the requester's poverty). These are two motivations and two intentions, mixed together in partnership.

ANOTHER KIND is that one knows that if (the requester) were a relative but not poor, or poor and not a relative, he would not have given it; but since both (requisites) had come together, he was moved to give. The similitude of the first is that of two men who are lifting a stone that each one would be able to do by himself. The similitude of the (second)

¹⁵⁷³ In order to stress his point, Al-Ghazzali first gives the Arabic terms, then follows with the Persian equivalents.

is that of two weak men who, by the strength of each other's arms, lift a stone which each one would not be able to do by himself.

THE THIRD is that one motivation be weak and not impel one to act, while the other is strong enough to cause one to act by itself, but because of the former, doing so is easier; just as when a person performs the obligatory evening prayer alone, but when people are present it is easier for one and more lively. However, if he were not in hope of spiritual reward, he would not perform the prayer to be seen by others. Its similitude is that of the strong man who can raise a stone, but is helped by a weak man too, so that it becomes easier.

Each one of these has a different rule, as will be discussed in (the Part about) Sincerity (below). The purpose of this is that thou know that the meaning of intention is motivation, cause, and stimulus. Sometimes this is pure and sometimes mixed.

EXCURSUS: [WHY THE INTENTION OF THE BELIEVER
IS BETTER THAN HIS DEED]¹⁵⁷⁴

Know that the Messenger (S) has said: "*The intention of the believer is better than his deed.*" The intention of the believer is better than his deed: he did not mean by this that an intention without the deed is better than a deed without the intention. For, this itself is not a secret, that a deed without the intention is not an act of worship, while an intention without the deed is an act of worship. Instead, the meaning is that one's devotion is with body and soul, and these are two parts. Of these two, that which is in the soul is better. The reason for this is that the aim of an act of the body (lasts) until the disposition of the soul changes. The aim of the intention and the act of the soul does not (just last) until the disposition of the body changes.

People imagine thus: that the intention is necessary for the deed, but the truth of the matter is that the deed must be for the intention. For the object of all is the moving about of the soul. It is the sojourner to the next world, and (eternal) happiness or misfortune will be its portion. Even though the body will be in view, it is but subservient, just as is the camel. For, although performing the Greater Pilgrimage cannot be accomplished without it, the camel is not the pilgrim. The turning about of the soul itself is not more than one thing: that it turn from this world to the Hereafter; rather, that it turn from this world and the Hereafter to God Most High. The direction of the soul does not precede its desire and inclination. When the desire for this world gains mastery over the soul, it turns to this world. Its attachment to this world is its desire and it was so at the beginning of creation. When the wishes of God Most High and of

¹⁵⁷⁴ From the AA text.

seeing the Hereafter dominate, its nature changes and it turns toward another direction.

Therefore, the aim of all deeds is the turning of the soul. The aim of prostration is not that the forehead turn in order to touch from the air to the ground. Rather, it is that the nature of the soul turns from passion¹⁵⁷⁵ and arrogance to humility. The purpose of (uttering) *God is Greater* is not that the tongue twist and flick about. Rather, it is that the nature of the soul should turn from glorification of the self to the glorification of God Most High. The purpose of casting stones during the Greater Pilgrimage is not to increase the number of stones at a particular spot or to exercise the arm. Rather, is that the soul stand firm upon its servitude (of God) and abandon the pursuit of appetite and the control of one's own intellect, and become obedient to (God's) command. He removes the reins from his own hand and surrenders them to the hand of (God's) command. As he says: "*At Thy service, in proof of Truth, in worship and as a slave.*" The purpose of the sacrifice is not that a sheep be killed. Rather, it is that the foulness of miserliness depart from thy breast. Thou dost not have compassion for animals because of thy nature, but thou hast it because of the command (of God). When it is said: "Slaughter this sheep!" thou dost not say: "What has this wretch done? Why should I punish it?" Rather, thou abandonest thy self and, in truth, become non-existent. For, the servant (of God) is non-existent with respect to himself and he is truly intoxicated with God. All acts of worship are like this.

However, the heart has been so created that when an inclination or desire appears in it, when the body rises in agreement with that, that quality becomes more firmly and strongly established in the heart. For example, when mercy for the orphan appears in the heart, if the hand is placed upon (the orphan's) head, that mercy grows stronger and the awareness of the heart increases. When the reality of humility appears, one acts humbly with the head too, and it approaches the ground.¹⁵⁷⁶ The intention of all acts of worship and the desire for the good is not that one turn to the world, but to the Hereafter.

Deeds (performed) with that intention become established and confirmed. Consequently, the deed is for the confirmation of the desire and the intention, even if it also comes from the intention. When it is so, it is obvious that intention is superior to the deed, for the intention itself is in the soul itself while the deed will flow from another place to the soul. If (the deed) does (this), it is useful, but if it does not, and it is done heedlessly, it is futile. The intention without the deed is this; it is not

¹⁵⁷⁵ Note the play on the different meanings of the *hawā*: air and passion.

¹⁵⁷⁶ Ghazzali is referring to the lowering of the head to the ground in prostration (*sujūd*) in formal prayer.

futile. This is just as if there were a pain in the stomach. When one takes medicine and it reaches (the belly), the object is attained. If one smears it on the chest so that its effect reaches it, it is also beneficial, but it would be better if it reached the stomach directly. The object of that ointment which touches the chest is not the chest but the stomach. It will necessarily be futile if it does not spread to the stomach. That which reaches the stomach, even though it does not reach the chest, will not be futile.

DISCLOSING THAT WHICH MAY BE FORGIVEN OF THE WHISPERINGS OF THE SELF, EVIL INSPIRATION, AND BAD THOUGHTS; AND THAT WHICH MAY NOT BE FORGIVEN AND FOR WHICH ONE IS CULPABLE

Know that the Messenger (S) said: "My people have been forgiven for whatever whisperings of the self there are"—and this is in both *Sahihs*.¹⁵⁷⁷ "The Most High King tells the angels not to record it (when) anyone intends to commit a sin but does not. If he does it, it is recorded as a one bad deed. If one intends to do a good deed and (something) good, one good deed is recorded, even though he does not do that good. If he does it, ten good deeds are recorded." In some Traditions, they are multiplied up to seven hundred. From this, some have imagined that one will not be culpable for every bad intention or thought. This is an error; we have shown that the main thing is the soul. The body is subservient to it. God Most High says: "Thou wilt be accountable for everything thou hast in thy heart, (whether) thou reveal it or conceal it." *And whether ye make known what is in your minds or hide it, God will bring you to account for it.* (Q. 2:284) And He says: "The eye, the ear, and the heart, all three will be queried." *Lo! The hearing and the sight and the heart—of each of these it will be asked.* (Q. 17:36) And He says: "They will not seize (you) for oaths in words on the tongue. They will seize (you) for what is intended in the heart. *God will not take you to task for that which is unintentional in your oaths; but He will take you to task for that which your hearts have garnered.* (Q. 2:225). It is not an offense for which they take (you) to task such as pride, hypocrisy, envy, and conceit. All of these are acts of the soul.

So, the truth which thou knowest in this section is that whatever occurs in the soul is of four kinds: Two are involuntary and one is not culpable for them. And, two are voluntary; there is culpability for them.

The parable of this is that one comes into danger as, for example, on a road where thou art walking and woman is following thee. If thou

¹⁵⁷⁷ "both *Sahihs*": That is, both of collections of Traditions called *Sahīh*, that of Bukhari and the other Muslim. Among Sunnis, these are the two most highly regarded collections of Traditions of the Prophet.

lookest back, thou wilt see her. This thought is called "the whispering of the self."

The second is that a desire be aroused in one's nature to look back. This is called "natural inclination."

The third is that (the desire) commands one's soul to look back. It commands this where there is no fear or shame to prevent it. For, it is not necessary for the soul to order everything be done which one's carnal appetite demands. Instead, it may say that it is not a proper thing to do. We call this "the judgment of the soul"

The fourth is that one intends slightly and determines to look back. This determination quickly becomes resolution, if the one does not dismiss the decree of the heart because one is frightened by God Most High or by people, so that that decision is nullified.

Thus, one is not culpable for the first two states which we call "the promptings of the self" and "natural inclination," for they are not under one's control and God Most High says: *God tasks no soul beyond its capacity.* (Q. 2:286) These promptings are such that 'Uthman bin Maz'un¹⁵⁷⁸ said to the Messenger (S): "This self of mine says that I should castrate myself so as to be relieved of carnal appetites." (The Messenger) said: "Do not do that, for the castration of my people is fasting."¹⁵⁷⁹ ('Uthman) said: "This self of mine says that I should also not eat meat." (The Messenger) said: "No, for I love meat and if I were to obtain it, I would eat it, and if I were to ask for it, God Most High would give it (to me.)" ('Uthman) said: "This self of mine says that I should go a mountain as do the monks." (The Messenger) said: "Do not go, for the monkhood of my people is Pilgrimage and Defense of the Faith." Therefore, these thoughts that occurred to him are the promptings of the self, and they are forgiven, for he had not decided to obey them and he had consulted about them.

As for the two which are at one's choice, it is the judgment of the soul that it is should be done and it is the resolution of the soul to do it. One is culpable for both of these, even if one does not execute them because of shame, fear, or some other hindrance, but not for the sake of God Most High. The meaning of a servant (of God)'s culpability is not that anger comes to Him for a person and now he is punished in revenge.

¹⁵⁷⁸ 'Uthmān bin Maz'ūn: a Companion of the Prophet, the fourteenth among them to accept Islam. He was one of those sent to Ethiopia to escape the Quraysh-led oppression in Makkah and was the first of the Muhajirs (emigrants from Makkah) to die in Madinah, the Prophet at his side.

¹⁵⁷⁹ A reference to the abstention from sexual intercourse during the hours of fasting. This remark was prompted by 'Uthman bin Maz'un's renunciation of sexual intercourse with his wife as an act of self-discipline, which the Prophet cautioned him against, pointing out that his wife had rights too.

for the Divine Presence is beyond anger and revenge. Rather, it means that because of the intention that he had made, his soul has acquired a characteristic that causes it to fall more distant from the Divine Presence.

We have discussed this his wretchedness above, for his (spiritual) happiness lies in that he turn his face from the world toward God Most High, but his face is turned toward his desire. His affection is for that. Every desire and intention he makes related to the world strengthens his affection for the world, and he falls more distant from that which he needs. The meaning of his being culpable and accursed is that he becomes more involved (with the world) and more distance (from God). This is a matter that is by him, with him, and in him, too. However, there is neither delight at his devotion, nor is there anger at his sin so that He would take revenge upon him. However, such an interpretation is suitable for the people's intellect.

No doubt remains for whoever has mastered these mysteries that one is accountable for the states of the soul. The absolute proof of this is that the Messenger (S) said: "Two men draw their swords against each other and one is slain. The slain and the slayer are both in hell." They asked: "Indeed! Why the slain?" He said: "Because he had desired to slay the other if he had been able." Another (proof) is that he said: "A man has some wealth which he does not use wisely. Another says: 'If I had that, I would do the same.' Both are equal in that offense." This is nothing more than the intention of the soul. There is no doubt that if a person finds a woman in her nightclothes and lies with her on the supposition that she is an unknown woman, he becomes a sinner, even if she is (actually) his lawful wife. Moreover, if a person performs a formal prayer in a state of impurity thinking that he is in a state of purity, there is spiritual reward for him. But, if he thinks that he is in a state of impurity (when performing the prayer), he is a sinner, even if he remembers after completing the formal prayer that he had purified himself. All of these are conditions of the soul.

However, when a person intends to sin and then does not do so out of fear of God Most High, a good deed is recorded for him, as has been related in the Traditions. For, the intention was in agreement with (his) nature and refraining was a struggle in opposition to (his) nature, and the effect (of that abstention) in brightening the soul is greater than the effect of the intention in darkening it. The meaning of the recording of a good deed is this and the meaning of that Tradition is this. However, if one refrains because of inability and one has not atoned for it, that darkness does not fall away and one is culpable for it, just as the slain man who was unable to kill his opponent and was slain himself.

DISCLOSING THOSE DEEDS THAT CHANGE ACCORDING TO THE INTENTION

Know that there are three kinds of deeds: acts of devotion, sins, and the permitted.

(THE FIRST KIND: SINS.) It may be that because the Messenger (S) said: "*Verily deeds are according to intentions*," that a sin, with a good intention, can also be counted as an act of worship. This is an error. Rather, on this one kind, intention has no effect on it, but a bad intention makes it worse. It is like this: a person backbites in order to please the heart of someone; or he establishes a mosque, school, or retreat using unlawful wealth and says: "My intention is good." He does not know even this much: that it is not good because a resolution to do good with evil¹⁵⁸⁰ is another evil. If he understands all (of this), he is a sinner. If he does not know and imagines that this is good, he is also a sinner, for acquiring knowledge is a religious obligation. Most of mankind's perdition is from ignorance.

It is for this that Sahl Tustari said that there is no sin greater than ignorance; and ignorance with ignorance of the ignorance is greater because, if one does not know what he does not know, he will never learn and this becomes a veil and an impediment for him. In the same way, instructing a student—whose objective thou knowest to be the acquisition of wealth from judgeship, religious endowments, the property of orphans and the property of the ruler, the accumulation the (things of the) world, and the devotion of himself to contending for superiority and disputation—is unlawful.

If the teacher says: "My intention is to spread the knowledge of the Religious Law and (the student) uses in corruption, (and) I would be held culpable for my own (good) intention!" This is pure ignorance. It is like the person who gives someone a sword to commit brigandage, or gives or sells grapes to a person he knows will make wine from them. He says: "My intention was generosity, for no one is dearer to God Most High than the generous." This is out of his ignorance! Instead, if he knows that the man will commit brigandage, he should take the sword from his hand. How is it possible that it be lawful to give him another? Indeed, all of the forefathers took refuge with God Most High from the lewd scholar. They dismissed any student in whom they saw the effects of sin. Even Ahmad Hanbal dismissed a long-time student because he had seen that he had plastered the outside walls of his residence with mud plaster. He said: "Thou hast taken one fingernail from the highway of the Muslims. It is not proper to teach thee." Thus, a sin with a good

¹⁵⁸⁰ "evil": the unlawfully acquired wealth.

intention does not become a good deed. Rather, the good is that which has been commanded (by God).

THE SECOND KIND: ACTS OF DEVOTION. In these, intention has two aspects with regard to effect: one is that its basis becomes correct with the intention; and the other is that however much the intention is increased, the spiritual reward is multiplied. Whoever acquires the knowledge (of making an) intention can make ten good intentions with one act of devotion, so that it becomes several¹⁵⁸¹ acts of devotion. For example, when one goes into retreat in the mosque:

ONE DECLARES the intention that this is the house of God Most High. Whoever enters it, is as though he has come to visit God. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever enters the mosque has visited God Most High, and it is the right of the visitor to be honored by the visited."

THE SECOND is that one awaits the next formal obligatory prayer, and in the Traditions, it is related: "The one awaiting the (beginning of) formal prayer is in the formal prayer."¹⁵⁸²

THE THIRD is that one makes the Intention so that with it the eyes, ears, hands, tongue, and feet cease movement. This is a species of fasting, for in the Traditions, it is related: "Sitting in the mosque is the monkhood of my people."

THE FOURTH is that one puts aside (worldly) works so that one gives the totality of his self to God Most High and busies himself with remembrance, meditation, and secret conversation.

THE FIFTH is that one finds safety from the mixing with people and their evil.

THE SIXTH is that if one sees some interdicted act in the mosque he forbids it. If one sees something (untoward), he commands (that it be stopped). If a person performs his prayer badly, he may instruct (him).

THE SEVENTH is that one may see some religious person and take him as a brother in faith, for the mosque is the resting place of the religious.

THE EIGHTH is that one is ashamed before God Most High to commit a sin in His house or entertain bad thoughts.

Make all acts of devotion analogous to this, for in each one many intentions can be made so that the spiritual reward becomes multiplied.

THE THIRD KIND IS THE PERMITTED,¹⁵⁸³ and let no rational being who wallows in the permitted like heedless beasts neglect a good

¹⁵⁸¹ "several," following AA's text. HK has "ten," but only eight are enumerated.

¹⁵⁸² That is, the time one spends sitting in anticipation of the beginning of the formal prayer is considered part of the time spent in that devotion.

intention, for that is a great loss because he will be questioned about all of (these acts) and there will be a reckoning concerning all of the permitted things. He will be held accountable if his intention is bad. And, if it be good, it will redound to him. Otherwise, it will be quits. But he will have wasted time and spent it in that in which there is no benefit for him, and he will have disobeyed this verse: *And forget not thy portion of the world and be thou kind even as God has been kind to thee.* (Q. 28:77) That is, the world is transitory. Take thy portion from it so that it stays with thee.¹⁵⁸⁴ The Messenger (S) said: "The servant of God will be asked about all that he has done, even to the amount of collyrium applied about the eyes, or the bit of earth rubbed with between fingers, or the hand placed upon the clothing of a brother."

The study of the intention for the permissible things is lengthy, but it must be learned. An example is that using a pleasant scent is permissible and lawful when a person uses it on Friday (for the congregational prayer), (but) is not lawful when used with the purpose to display one's wealth or to deceive the people, or in the pursuit of gaining some place in the hearts of strange women with the intent of corruption. However, good intentions are those such as the aim of showing respect and homage to the house of God Most High; and with the intention of the comfort which touches his neighbors, so that they are put at ease and that his own unpleasant (body) odor be dispelled and not annoy them, lest they fall into the sin of backbiting.¹⁵⁸⁵ Or, he makes the intention to strengthen his resolve so as to purify it and increase its strength and to remember God Most High and to accustom himself to meditation and to be more able (to do so). These and the likes of these intentions occur to the person whose desire for good deeds dominates him, and from each one of these is a (divine) grace.

The servants of God among the forefathers were like that, for they desired that there be a good intention in every act of their eating, going to the lavatory, and lying (with their wives) so that not any one of these would be for no good reason. By making the purpose good, spiritual reward would come from it. Just as when they lie with their wives, they made their intention the siring of children and to increase the people of the Purified One (S);¹⁵⁸⁶ they declared the intention to comfort

¹⁵⁸³ "Permitted" (*mubāhāt*): or, "optional," acts to which Islamic law is indifferent. Acts for which neither punishment nor spiritual reward may be expected. However, Ghazzali says that there will be some kind of account for these too.

¹⁵⁸⁴ "stay with thee": That is, "stay with thee to the Hereafter."

¹⁵⁸⁵ "backbiting" (*ghībat*): in this case, criticizing him in his absence because of offensive body odor. The custom of putting on a perfume or scent when going to the mosque, especially for the congregational prayer on Friday, is maintained to this day, especially in warm countries.

¹⁵⁸⁶ "the Purified One (S) (*Mustafā*): An epithet for the Prophet Muhammad (S).

the family¹⁵⁸⁷ to preserve them from sin and to preserve themselves from sin. Sufyan Thawri put on his clothes inside out. They told him about that. He raised his hand to change them, then stopped and left his clothes as they were, saying: "I have put these on (this way) for the sake of God Most High. I do not desire to change them not for the sake of God Most High." Zechariah (A) was working as a laborer some place; a group of people came to him. He was eating bread, but he did not ask them to eat. When he had finished eating, he said: "If I had not eaten all of the bread, I would have been left unequal to the task of (my employers') work and would not have finished it. I would have forgone a religious obligation for a popular custom."¹⁵⁸⁸

Sufyan Thawri was eating when someone came to him. He did not say: "Eat" while he was eating. Then, he said: "If it were not for the fact that I had borrowed it, I would have invited thee to eat." And he said: "Whoever says to someone: 'Eat,' while he dislikes that in his heart, if that person does not eat, he has committed one sin and that is hypocrisy. If he eats, he has committed two sins: one is hypocrisy and the other is that he has committed treachery to that person by setting him to eat something which he would not eat if he knew the heart (of the person offering the food.)"

DISCLOSING THAT CHOICE IN WHICH INTENTION DOES NOT ENTER

Know that when a simple-hearted man hears that there is an intention possible for every permitted thing, it may happen that he say with his soul or his tongue: "I have formed the intention to marry for the sake of God Most High," or: "I eat bread for the sake of God Most High," or: "I recite my lessons and give lectures in assemblies for the sake of God Most High," and suppose that this is an Intention, while (instead), it is the speech of the tongue or the self. An Intention is an attraction and an inclination that appears in the soul, impelling that man to act, like an urge that importunes until one rises to answer it and act. This appears when motive appears and becomes dominant.

When there is no urge, the intention in words is like a sated person's saying: "I have formed the intention to be hungry," or when leaving a person, to say: "I have formed the intention to like him," and this is absurd. Just as a person who has an appetite for (sexual) intercourse says: "I have formed an intention to father a child." This is futile. When the motivation for the contract is the appetite, he says: "I

¹⁵⁸⁷ "the family": here, a euphemism for wives. That is, to satisfy lawfully the natural desires of the women.

¹⁵⁸⁸ That is, if he had shared his meal, he would not have been strong enough to fulfill his obligation to his employer. This obligation took precedence over the sharing of his meal that custom dictates.

have formed the intention to make the contract for the sake of the (Prophetic) Practice of the (Religious) Law." This is futile. Instead, first, faith in the Law must be strong, then he must reflect upon all that has come down in the Traditions about the spiritual reward of marriage for the purpose of procreation, so that the zeal for that spiritual reward quicken inside of him so as to impel him to marriage. This is the Intention itself, without its being articulated. For whoever is motivated to act by an eagerness for obedience (to God) to stand in formal prayer, this in itself is the Intention. (Just) uttering with the tongue: "I have formed the intention (to perform formal prayer)," is useless. Just as when a hungry person says: "I have formed the intention to eat because of my hunger." This is useless. For, when one is hungry, the eating itself is necessarily because of that (hunger). And wherever the enjoyment of the self appears, the intention for the Hereafter becomes difficult—unless the matter of the Hereafter has dominated all.

Therefore, the point of this is that thou know that intention for that is not in thy control. For, intention is a desire that causes one to act, and thine action is according to thy power so that if thou wantest to, thou doest it; and if thou dost not want to, thou dost not do it. However, thy desire is not in thy control so that if thou desirest, thou desirest, and if thou dost not desire, thou dost not desire. Moreover, there is the desire which is created and there is the desire which is not created. The cause of its appearance is that belief occurs to thee. Thy motive in this world or the next world is tied to some matter so that it may be that thou becomest desirous of it. A person who does not know these mysteries defers many acts of devotion because the intention is not present.

Ibn Sirin did not perform the formal (funerary) prayer at the bier of Hasan Basri. He said: "I do not find the intention." Sufyan Thawri was asked why he did not perform the formal prayer at the bier of Hammad bin Sulayman.¹⁵⁸⁹ He said: "If I had had the intention, I would have done so." Someone requested Tawus for a supplication. He said: "Be patient until the intention comes, then I shall supplicate (for thee)." When they would ask him to narrate Traditions, sometimes he would not do it and other times he would suddenly narrate a Tradition, saying: "I was waiting for the intention to appear." Someone said: "It has been a month that I have been trying to form a sound intention to visit such-and-such a sick person. It has not happened yet."

In sum, so long as the zeal for religion and the fear (of God and the Hereafter) do not master a person, intention will not come appear for any good deed. However, it may come—with effort also—in (the performance of) religious obligations. It may be that intention does not come until one thinks again about the fire of hell and frightens oneself

¹⁵⁸⁹ Hammād bin Sulaymān: A Traditionist mentioned by Ibn Qutaybah in *Al-Ma'arif*.

with that. When a person understands these truths, a person may leave off virtues and resort to the permissible (but religiously indifferent). The intention for these permitted things is like that of a person who finds an intention for retaliation, but not for forgiveness.¹⁵⁹⁰ With respect to him, retaliation is superior. And, it may have happened that the intention for the night formal prayer not come, but one receive the intention to sleep so that one may arise in the morning at dawn. For him sleep was better. Moreover, if one becomes weary of worship and knows that if he spends an hour in recreation with his family or in conversation and pleasant talk with some person, his zeal will return, this enjoyment is superior for him than the intention to worship wearily.

Abu Darda (R) says: "I let myself play and relax from time to time so that the zeal for God Most High may return." 'Ali (R) says: "If thou keepest the soul continually in loathing, it will become blind." This is as though a physician gives meat to a sick person—even though it is of a hot temperament¹⁵⁹¹—to restore his strength in order to have the strength (to endure) the medicine. Or, a person flees from the ranks in a battle so that the enemy will pursue him. Then, suddenly he turns and strikes back at him. Fighters use many such tricks. The way of religion is all battle and debate with oneself and with Satan, and it comes to need (both) kindness and cunning. This is sanctioned by the great of religion, even though the deficient scholars do not know the path to that.

EXCURSUS: [WHATEVER THE ADMIRABLE SERVANT OF GOD DOES,
HE DOES FOR THE SAKE OF GOD]¹⁵⁹²

Now that thou hast learned that the meaning of intention is motivation for action, know that there is the person whose motivation for devotion is the fear of hell. There is the person whose motivation is the blessings of Paradise. Whoever acts for the sake of Paradise is the slave of his belly and his genitalia and is killing himself so that he will fall in a place where he will satisfy his belly and his genitalia. And he who acts out of fear of hell is like the bad slave who does not work except out of fear of his master. Both of these have nothing to do with God Most High.

¹⁵⁹⁰ "retaliation" (*qiṣās*): the law of retaliation: a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, etc. It may be invoked for loss of life or bodily injury or commuted to payment to the victim's relatives in the case of death, or to the victim himself in case of injury. The forgiveness mentioned is the commutation to monetary payment, or outright forgiveness. In this illustration, the person cannot find the intention in his heart to commute what is due, but can find the intention to exact the full penalty for the wrong.

¹⁵⁹¹ A reference to the theory of hot and cold foods. Hot foods should not be given to persons suffering from certain ailments. In this case, the hot food, since it is strengthening, is given to the patient to enable him to endure the medicine, just as today patients are often strengthened before undergoing operations.

¹⁵⁹² From the AA text.

On the contrary, the admirable servant of God is he who does what he does for the sake of God Most High, not in the hope of Paradise, or in the fear of hell. He is like the person who looks upon his beloved for the sake of the beloved, not because his beloved gives him silver and gold; for whoever looks for the sake of silver and gold, his beloved is silver and gold. Consequently, whoever's beloved and adored one is not the beauty and majesty of the Divine Presence cannot form such an intention.

The worship of that person who has become thus is all meditation upon the beauty of God and conversation with Him. If he performs an act of devotion with his body, it is because he loves to carry out the command of (his) Beloved. Then he desires to also discipline the body in servitude and he serves that Presence, as much as he is able, lest his soul be restrained from the contemplation of that Beauty. If he refrains from sinning, he does so because he knows that following his carnal appetites veils him from the pleasure of witnessing and conservation with God Most High. The spiritually cognizant one is truly he.

Ahmad Khadruwiyah¹⁵⁹³ saw God in a dream Who said: "All people seek something from Me except Abu Yazid who seeks Me." Shibli, may God have mercy upon him, was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with you?" He answered: "He criticized me because one time these words flowed from my tongue: 'What loss is greater than this, that Paradise be lost?' He said: 'Nay, what loss is greater than that seeing Me be lost!'" The true nature of this love and this pleasure will be discussed in the Chapter on Love,¹⁵⁹⁴ if God Most High wills it.

PART TWO: CONCERNING SINCERITY, VIRTUE, AND TRUTH, AND THEIR DEGREES

As for the virtue of sincerity, since thou knowest that God Most High said: *And they were ordered naught other than to serve God, sincere to Him in religion.* (Q. 98:5) And He, may He glorified and exalted, said: *Surely, pure religion is for God only.* (Q. 39:3) He said:

¹⁵⁹³ Ahmad Khadruwiyah: Abū Hāmid Aḥmad bin Khadruwiyah al-Balkhī. A soldier, he married Fatimah, the daughter of the Amir of Balkh. She was already renowned as a Sufi. She accompanied Ahmad on a visit to Bayazid during which she removed her veil. This angered Ahmad, but this remarkable woman replied that while he was her natural spouse, Bayazid was her religious consort. They settled in Nishabur. Ahmad wrote well-regarded treatises on ethics and mysticism. Among his sayings: "Hide the glory of poverty." His association with Bayazid places him in the 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century. (Hujwiri)

¹⁵⁹⁴ Chapter Nine of this Pillar.

"The people have not been commanded except to worship with sincerity, and sincere religion is for God Most High alone." The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High says: 'Sincerity'¹⁵⁹⁵ is one of My mysteries. I have placed it in the soul of the servant whom I love." And the Messenger (S) said to Mu'adh: "Act with sincerity so that a little will suffice." Everything that we have mentioned concerning the censure of hypocrisy also concerns sincerity, for the opinion of the people is one of the causes for the cutting off of sincerity, and there are other causes also.

Ma'ruf Karkhi, may God have mercy upon him, used to scourge himself with a whip, saying: "*O self! Be sincere in order to find salvation!*" Act sincerely in order to attain deliverance.¹⁵⁹⁶ Abu Sulayman¹⁵⁹⁷ says: "Blessed is that person during whose life (at least) a single step is correct in sincerity, so that in it he may have desired (nothing) other than God Most High." Abu Ayyub Sijistani¹⁵⁹⁸ says: "Sincerity in intention is more difficult than the basis of the intention." Someone was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee?" He answered: "All that I had done for His sake, I saw in the scale pan of good deeds, even a pomegranate seed that I had picked up from a road and even a cat that had died in my house. And I saw a thread of silk that I had tied to my cap in the pan of my bad deeds. There had been a donkey that had died that I did not see in the pan of good deeds. I said: 'O glory be to God! The cat was among my good deeds, but not the donkey.' He said: 'That which thou hast sent from there has come there. When thou heardest (the donkey) had died, thou saidst: '*(Nothing) except the curse of God.*' If thou hadst said: '*In the way of God,*' thou wouldst have received (the spiritual reward).' I had given in charity for the sake of God, but people were watching and looking; their watching also pleased me. That was neither to my credit, nor to my

¹⁵⁹⁵ "sincerity" (*ikhhlās*): It should be pointed out that the Arabic word *ikhhlās* can also mean "purity, liberation, candor, loyalty," etc.

¹⁵⁹⁶ AA and HK differ on the exact wording of this saying of Ma'ruf Kharkhi and Ghazzali's paraphrase of it. They vowel the Arabic differently: *yā nafsi, akhlīṣi takhlāṣi* (*takhhlāṣi*—a form that does not occur in standard Arabic—is probably a misprint for *takhhlusī*) (HK); *yā nafsu, ukhlūṣ takhalluṣī* (AA) They would mean, respectively: "O my self, be faithful (in order) to be liberated/saved" (HK); and "O self, be pure/liberated (in order) to be my deliverance." Ghazzali's paraphrase also differs in each text: *khalās kun tā khalās yābī* (HK) and *ikhhlās kun tā khalās yābī* (AA); meaning, respectively: "Set it free/leave it alone in order to find deliverance" (HK), and "Act sincerely in order to find deliverance" (AA). The choice of words in the translation of this passage has been made with attention to the context.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Abu Sulayman: Probably Abu Sulayman Darani, see Note 574.

¹⁵⁹⁸ Abū Ayyūb Sijistānī: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

detriment.”¹⁵⁹⁹ Sufyan Thawri commented: “He¹⁶⁰⁰ obtained a large fortune because it was not to his detriment.”¹⁶⁰¹

Someone says: “I was going by sea to fight in defense of the faith. One of my friends was selling a feed bag.¹⁶⁰² I said (to myself): ‘I ought to buy it, use it, and then sell it in such-and-such a city at a profit.’ That night, I dreamt that two persons were descending from the heavens. One was saying to the other: ‘Write the names of the defenders of the faith and write that so-and-so has come to do business, and so-and-so has come to see the sights, and so-and-so has come hypocritically.’ Then he looked at me and said: ‘Write that so-and-so has come to do business.’ I cried: ‘God! God! Look at my affair! I have nothing! How can I have come to do business? I have come for the sake of God Most High.’ He said: ‘O shaykh! Didst thou not buy that feed bag in order to profit by it?’ I wept. I said: ‘God! God! I am not a businessman.’ (The angel) said to the other: ‘Write that so-and-so had come to fight in defense of the faith. On the way, he bought a feed bag in order to make a profit. Let God Most High give His decree concerning him as He wills.’”

From this, it has been said that in the sincerity of an hour lies the salvation of eternity. However, (unalloyed) sincerity is rare. It has been said that faith is the seed; the deed, the cultivation; and its (irrigating) water is sincerity.

There was a devotee among the Children of Israel. He was told that in such-and-such a place there is a tree where it was worshipped by a people and taken it as a god. He became angry and rose up. He placed an axe upon his shoulder in order to cut down that tree. Iblis, in the form of an old man, came before him on the road and asked: “Where art thou going?” He answered: “I am going to cut that tree down.” (Iblis) said: “Do not go. Occupy thyself with worship, for that is better for thee than doing that.” (The devotee) said: “This is my act of worship.” (Iblis) declared: “I shall not allow it!” and he began to fight with him. The devotee threw (Iblis) on the ground and sat upon his chest. Iblis cried: “Desist, so that I may tell thee something. If it does not meet with thine approval, then do what thou wilt.” (The devotee) let go of him. He said: “O devotee, thou art a poor man and the people provide for thee. If thou hast something thou canst utilize and provide for other devotees, it

¹⁵⁹⁹ Literally, “that also was for myself and not upon me”: It *did* not benefit me nor did it cause me loss; that is, an act with neither religious merit nor detriment.

¹⁶⁰⁰ “He” following AA’s text. HK makes the subject of the sentence “a young man” (*jawānī*), which seems less appropriate here.

¹⁶⁰¹ That is, the narrator of the preceding story was fortunate that he was not considered guilty of flaunting his charity.

¹⁶⁰² The feed bag tied to the noses of beasts of burden, especially horses, mules, and donkeys containing grain or fodder for them to eat. It is a *trivial item*, but the point of the story is, of course, that even trivialities can seriously corrupt intention.

would be better for thee than cutting down that tree. They will plant another and will not lose anything by it. Desist, so that every day I shall put two dinars under thy pillow." The devotee thought this over and said: "Thou art right. It would be better if I gave one dinar in charity and spent the other than if I cut down that tree. I have not been commanded to do that, nor am I a prophet so that I would be duty-bound to do so." So, in this opinion, he returned. The next morning, he saw the two dinars. He took them. The next day, he found another two dinars. He took them. He said: "It is good that I did not cut down that tree." On the third day, he found nothing. He became angry, picked up the axe, and went out. Iblis came to him and said: "How far art thou going?" (The devotee) answered: "To cut down that tree." (Iblis) said: "Thou art lying! Thou wilt never be able to cut down that tree." They began to fight and (Iblis) overthrew the devotee as though he were a sparrow in the hand (of Iblis). He said: "Go back home! If thou dost not, I shall cut thy head off right now like that of a sheep!" (The devotee) said: "Desist, for I am going back. But tell me the truth: How is it that the other time I was superior and this time thou." (Iblis) answered: "Because at that time, thou wert angry for the sake of God Most High, and He made me subservient to thee. I cannot compete with anyone who does something for the sake of God Most High. However, this time thine anger was for thyself and for the money. We are stronger than anyone who pursues his own passions."

THE TRUE NATURE OF SINCERITY

Know that as thou hast come to know intention, which is the motivation in one's action and its importuner, if that importuner is one, it is called sincerity (or purity). If there are two importuners, it is "mixed" and not pure. "Mixed," for example, is like this: One is fasting for the sake of God Most High, but there is also the aim for good health. Or, it is also for the purpose of reducing the consumption of provisions. Or, so as not to take the trouble to cook and prepare food. Or, one has something to do so that one does not fall asleep and will be able to do the work. Or, one frees a slave so as to be relieved of the expenditure for him, or to escape (the slave's) bad nature. Or, one performs the Greater Pilgrimage so that one become strong and healthy from the trip, or to tour and see (different) lands, or to get rest from one's wife and children and their troubles for a few days, or to escape the problems (caused by) an enemy. Or, to perform formal prayer at night so as not to fall asleep and be able to watch one's goods.

Or, to acquire knowledge so as to be able to earn one's keep or to be able to preserve one's own goods and property, or to be valued and honored, or to teach and lecture at gatherings to escape the sorrow of

silence and not be lonely. Or, to copy the Book¹⁶⁰³ so that one's handwriting may become good and straight. Or, to go on Pilgrimage on foot so as to save the cost of hire. Or, to purify oneself in order to be blessed and clean, or to perform the Greater Ablution in order to have a pleasant (body) scent. Or, to seclude oneself in the mosque so that one will not have to pay house rent. Or, to give charity to a beggar so as to be relieved of his importunity and insistence, or to give something to the poor because one is ashamed to withhold it. Or, to visit the sick so that should he himself become sick, they will visit him, or so the sick person not complain about him and take offense, or to do some good deed for one of these, so that he be known for righteousness. This is hypocrisy and we have discussed the verdict about hypocrisy.

However, all of these thoughts nullify sincerity, whether it be to a smaller or greater extent. Rather, (sincerity) is pure when there is absolutely no portion in it for oneself. Instead, it is purely for the sake of God Most High. As when the Messenger (S) was asked what sincerity was, he said: "That thou say: *My Lord God! Then thou becomest correct as thou hast been commanded.*" "Thou sayest: 'O God,' then, thou takest the straight path as has been commanded."

And, so long as a person is not liberated from the traits of human nature, this is extremely hard. Concerning this, it has been said that nothing is harder or more difficult than pure sincerity, and if in a lifetime one step is correct in sincerity, there is hope for salvation. In reality, extracting a pure and sincere act from among the motives and traits of human nature is like extracting milk from intestinal feces or from blood. As He said: *From betwixt the refuse and the blood, pure milk palatable to the drinkers.* (Q. 16:66)¹⁶⁰⁴ Therefore, the remedy for this is that, first, one cuts the ties to the world and that the love for God Most High becomes supreme, so that one becomes like a lover whose every desire he desires is for the sake of his beloved. If this person eats food and goes to the privy, for example, it is possible that there can be sincerity in that. He who is mastered by his love for the world can be sincere in formal prayer and fasting (only) with difficulty, because all acts take on the character of the soul and incline to that side to which the soul inclines. The deeds of whoever is dominated by his love for rank are directed at people so that when he washes his face in the morning and dons his clothing, it is all for the sake of the people.

¹⁶⁰³ That is, the Quran.

¹⁶⁰⁴ The complete verse is: *And lo! In the cattle, there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, from betwixt the refuse and the blood, pure milk palatable to the drinkers.* (Q. 16:66) The separation of milk from blood and the contents of the intestines in the human (and animal) body is a sign of the handiwork of God, and a metaphor for the spiritual sustenance which God gives mankind.

Pure sincerity is in no act more difficult than in holding assemblies, teaching, the narration of Traditions, and that which is directed at people; for, usually the motivation is popularity,¹⁶⁰⁵ or is mixed with that. So, the object becomes popularity when the object should be being procuring the proximity (of God), either stronger or weaker. However, most of the religious scholars are incapable of keeping their souls pure from these considerations, except the fools who suppose that they are sincere and are deceived by that; they do not recognize their own defects. Indeed, many of the astute are incapable of this.

One of the saints says: "I made up the formal prayers of thirty years, all of which I had performed in the first rank, because one day I arrived late and stayed in the last rank. In my heart, I found that I was ashamed before the people who would say that I had arrived late. I understood (then) that my delight had all been from being seen by the people in the front rank." Therefore, (pure) sincerity is that which is hard to comprehend theoretically, and practicing it is even harder. Anything that is shared and insincere is not acceptable.

EXCURSUS: [FRAUD IN WORSHIP HAS FOUR DEGREES]¹⁶⁰⁶

Know that the great have said that the two bows of formal prayer of a learned person are superior to one year's worship of the ignorant person, because the ignorant person does not understand the detriments of an act. He does not know about the mixing of it with (other) motives and he imagines everything is purely sincere. Fraud in worship is just like fraud in gold. There is some gold at which whoever looks supposes to be gold and it even deceives a moneychanger, except for the master moneychanger. But, the ignorant suppose everything to be gold which looks like gold, and is not gold.

Fraud in worship that cuts off sincerity has four degrees, some more hidden and obscure. We record them as hypocrisy in order to expose them:

THE FIRST (DEGREE) is that when a servant of God is performing a formal prayer and people come, Satan says: "Do it better lest they criticize thee." This is itself obvious.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one knows this and avoids it. Satan says: "Do it better so that they will follow thee and thou mayst have the spiritual reward of their following thee." It may happen that he falls for this deceit and does not know that the spiritual reward of being followed is at the time that the light of his humility spreads to others. However,

¹⁶⁰⁵ Literally: "acceptance by the people" (*qabūl-i khalq*).

¹⁶⁰⁶ From the AA text.

since he was not humble, but that is the opinion of others, the spiritual reward is theirs, and he will be held culpable for his own hypocrisy.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one knows that performing formal prayer in private different from (one's formal prayer) in public is the essence of hypocrisy. One makes the decision to pray well in private so as to be able to do it as he does in public. This is more obscure, but it is also hypocrisy. However, one does this dissembling and hypocrisy to oneself, because one is ashamed of oneself that one's private praying should be different from when (he is) in the congregation. Because one prays well in public, one does the same in private and supposes that he has escaped the public hypocrisy, whereas in reality it he has also become a hypocrite in private.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is the most obscure: that one not know that the humility in private or public for the sake of people serves no purpose. Satan says to him: "Think again about the greatness of God Most High. Look! Dost thou not know where thou art standing?" Therefore, he thinks again and becomes humble and becomes adorned in the eyes of the people. If it is thus, that in private such thoughts do not customarily appear in one's heart, the reason for this (act) is hypocrisy. However, by this trick, Satan has presented it to him so that it remains veiled. Since one remembers the greatness of God Most High when one sees people, it is useless. On the contrary, being seen by the people and being seen by beasts of burden should be the same to him. If he finds a difference, he is not yet devoid of hypocrisy. We have spoken of this example in (the chapter) concerning hypocrisy.¹⁶⁰⁷

Concerning other motivations that we have discussed before this, there is much deception in the same way. Whoever does not understand these niceties keeps himself in sorrow and strives hard in vain and that which he does is all lost. It is with regard to this that God Most High said: *And the evils that they earned will appear unto them, and that whereat they used to scoff will surround them.* (Q. 39:47)

EXCURSUS: [A COMPOSITE INTENTION IS NOT DEVOID OF SPIRITUAL REWARD]¹⁶⁰⁸

Know that when an intention has become composite, if the intention for hypocrisy or some other motive be more dominant than the intention for worship, this will be a cause of punishment. If they are equal, it will be the cause neither of punishment nor of spiritual reward. If it be weaker, the act will not be devoid of spiritual reward. However much the Traditions indicate that when there is a sharing (of the object of

¹⁶⁰⁷ Third Pillar, Chapter Eight.

¹⁶⁰⁸ From the AA text.

the act of worship), it is said: "Go and seek thy reward for that from the person for whom thou hast done it!" but it is obvious to us that it is intended by (saying) that, that both aims be equal. Therefore, there is no reward when one seeks it and it is said: "Seek it from that person." At that place where the Tradition is the evidence of punishment, the intention is that all (of the deed) be for the purpose of hypocrisy, or that it be the dominant (motive). However, when the main motivation be the procurement of (divine) favor and the other (motive) be weak, (the act) should not be without spiritual reward, even if the spiritual reward does not achieve the degree of that which is purely sincere. We make this choice for two reasons:

ONE (REASON) is that it has become known to us with proof that the meaning of punishment is the distancing of the soul from suitability for the Divine Presence. The reason for this is that the veil is burned by fire. The aim for proximity is the seed of (spiritual) happiness, while the aim of hypocrisy is the seed of hardship. Compliance with these two aims is aiding them. One distances one (from God) and the other draws him closer. When they are equal, one turns a handbreadth farther and the other a handbreadth nearer, then they return to their former positions. If it becomes half a handbreadth closer, loss and distancing are obtained. If it becomes half a handbreadth farther, the nearness remains: as when a sick person eats a hot food and eats an equal amount of cold food, they become equal. If he eats less (of the cold), the hotness increases somewhat. If it increases, something of the hotness is decreased. The effect of sinning and devotion on the illumination and darkness of the soul is like the effect of medications upon the condition of the body. One atom of that will not be lost. Its preponderance or deficiency will be determined in the scales of justice. This is: *And whoever has done an atom's weight of good will see it.* (Q. 99:7) However, discretion is caution in that, for it may be that delight is the stronger motive, but one supposes it to be the weaker. The way of safety is that one close off the way of private motive.

The other reason is that there is a consensus that if a person transacts business on the way to perform the Greater Pilgrimage, no loss to his Pilgrimage is incurred, even though its spiritual reward is not like the spiritual reward of the (purely) sincere. However, since his main purpose is the performance of the Greater Pilgrimage and the business is secondary, on the whole, its spiritual reward is not lost to him, even though there may be some decrease. A person goes to fight in defense of the faith for the sake of God Most High, but one may go to fight in (either of) two regions. In one region, they are the rich and there will be much booty, in the other region, they are the poor. He goes to fight in the

region of the rich.¹⁶⁰⁹ He should not lose his spiritual reward completely, for a man is not devoid of that in himself which distinguishes between obtaining and not obtaining booty. *God save us*, if this were a condition, there is the fear of obtaining spiritual reward, for no deed would be correct—especially lectures, teaching, writing, and that which is directed towards the people. So long as a person does not receive everything of himself directly from that, it will not be devoid, for example, of (the possibility) that his writing be ascribed to another, or his words attributed to another who has learned of them, even though one may be displeased by that information.

PART THREE: CONCERNING TRUTHFULNESS

Know that truthfulness¹⁶¹⁰ is close to sincerity and its degree is great. Whoever achieves the perfection of truth is called "truly righteous."¹⁶¹¹ God Most High praises this person in the Quran: ... *men who are true to that which they have covenanted with God.* (Q. 33:23) And He said: *That He may question the truthful of their truthfulness.* (Q. 33:8) The Messenger (S) was asked: "In what does perfection lie?" He replied: "Speaking the truth and acting in sincerity." As a result, knowing the meaning of *ṣidq* is important, and the meaning of *ṣidq* is "truth." This veracity and truth¹⁶¹² lie in six things; whoever achieves perfection in all of them is a witness of truthfulness:

THE FIRST TRUTHFULNESS is that of the tongue, that one utter no lies in what he reports about his past and present, or a promise one gives about the future. We have noted before that the soul acquires the character of the tongue and a distorted soul comes from crooked speech, while it becomes straight from a truthful tongue. The perfection of this truth is with two things:

ONE (PERFECTION) is that one does not speak in parables so that, though one speaks the truth, a person understands something else. However, there is the situation when speaking the truth is not advisable, such as during war, between a man a woman,¹⁶¹³ and in making peace

¹⁶⁰⁹ He goes there because there is the prospect of greater booty.

¹⁶¹⁰ "veracity" (*ṣidq*): A word of Arabic origin meaning "truth, veracity, sincerity, candor," etc.

¹⁶¹¹ "truly righteous" (*ṣiddiq*): or, "faithful witness of the truth."

¹⁶¹² The Arabic *ṣidq* and the Persian *rāstī* are virtually synonymous. I use "veracity" for the former and "truth" for the latter merely to distinguish them in this passage. A parallel construction, giving a word in both Arabic and Persian, much favored in Persian literature, as is the same device in English of pairing words of Anglo-Saxon and Latin or French origin. There is an exact parallel here, for "veracity" is of Latin origin, while "truth" is from Old (Anglo-Saxon) English.

¹⁶¹³ "a man a woman" (*mard wa zan*): or "a husband and wife."

between people; there is permission to lie (in those situations). But the perfection of this is that in such a situation, one speak in allusions and as much as possible not utter explicit lies. If one does so, since he is sincere in his purpose and intention and he speaks for the sake of God Most High and for the welfare of the people, he does not fall from the degree of truth.

THE SECOND PERFECTION is that one seek truth from oneself in conversation with God Most High. When one says: "*I have turned my face,*" while one's soul is facing the world, he has uttered a lie and has not turned his face to God Most High. When he says: "*Thee do I worship,*" which means that I am Thy servant and that I worship Thee—but then he is tied to the world or tied to carnal passions, he is not under His control. Rather, he is controlled by his passions, and he has uttered a lie, for he is their servant and bound to them. Concerning this, the Messenger (S) said: "*Wretched is the slave of the dirham and the dinar.*" He called him a slave of gold and silver. Indeed, so long as the entire world does not achieve freedom, he shall not become a servant of God. The fullness of this liberty and freedom is that one become free from oneself, too, just as one is free from mankind so that no volition remain to one. Instead, one desires nothing other than God Most High and one is content with that which He does with one. This is the fullness of truth in being (God's) servant. A person who does not have this cannot be called truly righteous either.

THE SECOND TRUTHFULNESS is with the intention that one not desire anything which procures favor, except that of God Most High; nor does one admix anything with that. This is pure sincerity, and sincerity is also called truth. Whoever harbors any thought in his conscience other than seeking His favor is a liar in the worship that he displays.

THE THIRD TRUTHFULNESS is resolution: that a person resolve that if he had governmental authority, he would be just; if he had wealth, he would give all of it away in charity. If someone should appear who would be superior to him in governance, lecturing, or teaching, he would surrender (his post) to him. Sometimes this resolve is strong and decisive in him, at other times it is weak and hesitating. That which is unhesitatingly strong is called "resolute truthfulness," as when it is said: "This appetite is a liar," that is, it has no root; and: "It is truthful" when it is strong. The witness of truthfulness is he who always finds his resolution for good deeds at maximum strength, as 'Umar (R) said: "I would prefer to be taken and have my head struck off to being the commander of a people among whom is Abu Bakr."¹⁶¹⁴ He had found the

¹⁶¹⁴ That is, 'Umar did not consider himself worthy to give orders to Abu Bakr.

strong resolve in himself to endure having his head struck off. There is the person who, if given the choice between being killed himself and the killing of Abu Bakr, would prefer his own life. There is a great difference between that and him who would prefer his own death to being in command of Abu Bakr.

THE FOURTH TRUTHFULNESS is in faithfulness to one's resolve; for, it may happen that one's resolve be strong in risking one's life in battle or in surrendering one's position to a better in government, but when the time comes (to act), the self does not obey. Concerning this, God Most High said: *...men who are true to that which they have covenanted with God.* (Q. 33:23) That is, they are faithful to their own resolve and they sacrifice themselves. Regarding some folk who had resolved to give of their wealth, but were not faithful (to their word), He said thus: *And of them is he who made a covenant with God (saying): If He give us of His bounty, We shall give alms and become of the righteous. Yet, when He gave them of His bounty, they hoarded it and turned away, averse.* (Q. 9:75-76) to where He said: *because they lied;* (Q. 9:77)¹⁶¹⁵ until He called them liars in their covenant and promise.

THE FIFTH TRUTHFULNESS is that one not do any act that is not of the nature of one's inner character. For example, if a person walks slowly on the road (in a dignified manner) while inside him, there is no dignity; he is not truthful. That truthfulness comes from the concordance of the inner self and the public, and that is appropriate for a person whose essence and inner self is better than his exterior, or is the same as his exterior. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "O Lord God! Make my inner self better than (my) public self, and make my public self good." Whoever does not have this quality, in which the exterior reflects the interior, is a liar and falls away from truthfulness, even though his aim is not dissimulation.

THE SIXTH TRUTHFULNESS is that one seek the true nature of oneself in the stations of religion, such as asceticism, love, reliance, fear, hope, contentment, and enthusiasm, and not be satisfied with their explanation and appearances. For, no believer is completely devoid of these states though they may be weak. Whoever is strong in these is truthful in them. As He said: *The (true) believers are those only who*

¹⁶¹⁵ The full text of the passage is: *And of them is he who made a covenant with God (saying): If He give us of His bounty, We shall give alms and become of the righteous. Yet, when He gave them of His bounty, they hoarded it and turned away, averse. So He hath made the consequence (to be) hypocrisy in their hearts until the Day when they shall meet Him, because they broke their word to God that they had promised Him, and because they lied.* (Q. 9:75-77)

believe in God and His messenger and afterward doubt not, but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of God. Such are the truthful. (Q. 49:15) Therefore, whosoever's faith is complete is called "truthful." They are like the person who is afraid of something. The sign of this is that he trembles and his face turns pale; he cannot eat or drink and he is anxious. If a person fears God Most High in this way, it is said that this fear is genuine. However if one says: "I fear sinning," but does not stop (sinning), he is called "liar." In all the stations, there are many such distinctions.

So, whoever is truthful in all six of these meanings, and then it is at perfection (in them), is called "truly righteous." Persons who are truthful in (only) some of these are not called truly righteous, although their degree is according to their truthfulness.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCERNING RECKONING AND GUARDING

Know that God Most High says: "We shall place the scales on the Day of Resurrection and We shall not be unjust to any person. We shall bring forward whoever has done a *mithqal*¹⁶¹⁶ of a grain of good or evil and place it in the scales and We shall requite the account of the people and We are Sufficient": *And We set a just balance for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul is wronged in aught. Though it be of the weight of grain of mustard seed, We bring it. And We suffice for reckoners.* (Q. 21:47) Then, after He had given this promise, He commanded mankind to examine their accounts in this world, saying: *And let every soul look to that which it sendeth on before for the morrow and observe your duty to God; Lo! God is Aware of what ye do.* (Q. 59:18) And in the Traditions, it is related: "The wise person is he who has four hours: ¹⁶¹⁷ an hour for reckoning his own account, an hour for conversation with God Most High; an hour to arrange for one's sustenance; and an hour to rest from that which has been done of the lawful in the world." 'Umar (R) said: "*Make your accounts with yourselves before ye are held to account.*" Make your own accounts before the accounts are placed before you. God Most High says: *O ye who believe! Be patient,—be ye patient—and vie with each other in patience—struggle well against your selves and your passions—and be steadfast!—be steadfast in this religious struggle.*¹⁶¹⁸ (Q. 3:200)

So, the wise and the great ones of religion have realized that they have come into this world to engage in business, and the transactions are with the self. The profit or loss of these transactions is heaven and hell; rather, it is eternal happiness and misery. Therefore, one's self is put in the position of a business partner. Just as with a partner, conditions are made. Then, he is watched, and then he is audited. If he has been treacherous, he will be punished or reproof. So, (the wise and the saints), too, have stood with their selves in these six stations: fixing mutual conditions, vigilance, reckoning, punishment, striving, and reproof.¹⁶¹⁹

¹⁶¹⁶ one *mithqāl*: about 5 grams.

¹⁶¹⁷ "hours" (*sā'āt*): The conventional 60-minute hour is not meant here: rather, an indefinite period of time is intended. We would probably say "some time during the day."

¹⁶¹⁸ "religious struggle": *jihād*. Ghazzali's use of the word *jihād* here illustrates its comprehensive nature. He is referring to the struggle against the self, one of the many aspects of *jihād*, the effort to provide and protect the spiritual context of Islam. Armed conflict in defence of Islam is but another of them.

¹⁶¹⁹ The names of all of these six forms imply reciprocity. In Perso-Arabic they are, respectively: *mushārāṭat*, *murāqabat*, *muḥāsabat*, *mu'āqabat*, *mujāḥadat*, and *mu'ātabat*.

THE FIRST STATION: CONCERNING THE FIXING OF MUTUAL CONDITIONS

Know that the partner who gives wealth is an aide in the obtaining of profit, but it may happen that he becomes an adversary when he desires to do some treachery. So, one must first stipulate the conditions with a partner and then remain vigilant with him continually. Then one must bargain¹⁶²⁰ in the reckoning. The self takes precedence in this, for the profit of that transaction is eternal, while the profit of a worldly transaction is but for a few days. Whatever does not last is, in the view of the wise, worthless; so that it has been said that an evil that lasts is better than a good that does not last. Since every breath of the breaths of one's life is a precious jewel by which one may lay up treasure, reckoning and bargaining with respect to it is better

Therefore, the intelligent one is he who empties his soul of this affair for an hour after the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer and tells this matter to his self:¹⁶²¹ "I have no goods other than life, and each breath that passes cannot be made up, for the breaths are numbered in the knowledge of God Most High and will certainly not be added to. When life has passed, it cannot be regained. The work is now; for, time is short, while in the Hereafter, time is vast, but there is no work."¹⁶²² Today is thy day which God Most High has given to thee as life. If death comes upon thee, thou wilt yearn to be given a single day's respite to rectify thine affairs.

"Now, He has given thee that respite. Beware, O self! Do not waste that capital which thou possessest lest tomorrow there not be even a moment and nothing will remain save regret. Suppose thus today: that thou hast died and have begged that thou be given one more day's respite, and that that respite has been given! What is more harmful than that thou waste time and not obtain (spiritual) happiness from it?"

And in the Traditions, it is related: "Tomorrow, for every day and night which has twenty-four hours, twenty-four repositories will be placed before the servant of God. The door of one will be opened. He sees it full of the light of the good deeds that have been performed during that hour. From that, such joy, tranquillity, and glee reach his soul that if it were divided among all of the inhabitants of hell, they would become

¹⁶²⁰ "bargain" (*mīkāṣ*): or bidding. The Arabic root also refers to collecting taxes, but "bargain" seems more appropriate in this context.

¹⁶²¹ "he who empties his soul after the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer and tells this matter to his self": thus, following HK. AA has: "he who empties his soul for an hour after the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer and tells his soul..."

¹⁶²² By "work" in this sentence, Ghazzali is referring to the work of laying up provisions for the Hereafter. Though the Hereafter is eternal, there will be no opportunity for laying up provisions for it. That must be accomplished while sojourning upon the earth in this life.

unaware of its fire. That joy is because he knows that those lights will be the means of his acceptance by God Most High. The door of another repository is opened. He sees blackness and darkness and smells a great stench from which all the people of the Resurrection hold their noses. That is the time of sinning. Such terror, shame, and confusion will reach his soul that if they were divided among all the inhabitants of heaven, the blessings of heaven would become loathsome. Another door is opened: it is neither dark nor bright. That is the time that he wasted from his life. Such a regret and a feeling of being defrauded will come upon his soul, like that of a person who had power over a great kingdom and a vast treasure and who gave it up in prodigality so that (all) was lost. And every hour of his life, one by one, will be displayed to him in the same manner."

So, one says to one's self (after the morning prayer): "O self, like that, twenty-four hours have been placed before thee today. Beware! Leave no moment unoccupied, for thou shalt not be able to endure the regret for (it's loss)." The great have said: "Suppose that thou are forgiven;¹⁶²³ will not the degree and spiritual reward of the doers of good be lost, leaving thee in the regret for that?"

Therefore, one must entrust all of one's members to (thy self) and say: "Beware! Watch thy tongue and watch thine eyes," and do the same for the seven members.¹⁶²⁴ For, it has been said: "Hell has seven gates." Its gates are thy members because of each one may go to hell. Therefore, one recalls the sins that may come from each of these members and is wary of them. One remembers every act of worship that may be brought into existence by it and is eager about that. One determines to frighten the self. If it disobeys, one punishes it, for the self, however refractory and stubborn it may be, is amenable to counsel, and is affected by asceticism.

All of this is reckoning before action, as God Most High said: *Know that God knoweth what is in your minds, so beware of Him.* (Q. 2:235) And the Messenger said: "He is astute who does his own account and does that which will be of benefit to him after death." And he said: "Examine every thing that comes up. If it is on the Way, do it. If it leads one astray, do not do it and keep distant from it." Therefore, every day in the morning, the self needs such a stipulation, except for the person who is righteous. Then too, everyday is not devoid of some new affair that is also in need of stipulation.

¹⁶²³ That is, "Suppose that thou are forgiven, but have done no good deeds."

¹⁶²⁴ The seven members of the body: the head, the breast, the belly, the hands, and the feet; or: the head, hands, sides, and feet.

THE SECOND STATION: CONCERNING VIGILANCE

The meaning of vigilance is guarding and observing.¹⁶²⁵ Just as when merchandise is entrusted to a partner and the stipulations made, one must not be neglectful and one must remain alert with him, the self is also in need of alertness at every moment. If thou neglectest it, it will revert to its own nature in sloth and the indulgence of its appetites. The root of vigilance is that one know that God Most High is well acquainted with one in whatever one does and thinks. Mankind sees one's exterior, but God Most High sees one's interior. The exterior and interior of whoever has come to know this and whose soul has been mastered by the love of spiritual insight become chastened. If one does not have faith in this, one is an unbeliever. If one has faith, opposition is a great audacity for one, for God Most High says: *Does he not know that God sees?* (Q. 96:14) "Dost thou not know that God Most High sees thee?"

And that Ethiopian said to the Messenger: "I have committed many sins; is there repentance for me?" He replied: "Yes, there is." (The Ethiopian) asked: "At the time I sinned, did God Most High see?" (The Messenger) replied: "Yes, He saw." (The Ethiopian) exclaimed: "Ah!" cried out, and gave up the ghost.¹⁶²⁶ The Messenger (S) said: "Worship God as though—thou mightest say—thou seest Him. If thou canst not, indeed, know truly that He sees thee." Without thy knowing that He is watching over thee in all conditions, things will not come right. As He said: *Lo! God has been watching over you.* (Q. 4:1) Rather, the entirety of it is that thou be constantly in His view and that thou see Him.

One of the spiritual guides had a disciple whom he used to regard highly. The other disciples became jealous. He gave a chicken to each disciple and told him to kill it some place where it would not be seen. Each one went to a place alone and killed the chicken, but that disciple brought his chicken back alive. (The master) asked: "Why didst thou not kill it?" He answered: "I did not find any empty place where no one would see, for God Most High sees every place." So, with this, his degree became apparent to the others, for he is always witnessing, and he does not pay attention to anyone else.

When Zulaykha¹⁶²⁷ invited Joseph to come to her, she had previously gone to that idol which she considered a god and covered its

¹⁶²⁵ "observing" (*nigāh dāshtan*): or, "preservation, maintenance."

¹⁶²⁶ This story recalls its earlier appearance in the First Chapter of this Book.

¹⁶²⁷ Zulaykhā: the name of the wife of Potiphar in Arab and Islamic tradition. The 12th Chapter of the Quran is devoted to the story of Joseph, but she is not named, nor is she in the Bible. See Exodus 39:6-18. The incident of her covering the face of the idol so that it would not witness her proposed adultery is not found in the Quran, but is related in commentaries. The story of Joseph and Zulaykha is discussed in detail in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and the separate volume *Jacob and Joseph* taken from that.

face with a veil. Joseph said: "Thou art ashamed before a stone; why should I not be ashamed before the Creator of the seven heavens and the earth Who sees and hears (all)?" Someone saw Junayd and said: "I cannot control my eyes. How can I do that?" (Junayd) said: "By thy knowing that God Most High is looking at thee more than thou art looking at that person."

In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High said: "The Paradise of Eden is for those persons who, when they intend to sin, remember My greatness and stop and are ashamed."

'Abdullah bin Dinar¹⁶²⁸ said: "I was with 'Umar (bin) Khattab on the way to Makkah. We stopped at a place. A slave who was shepherding some sheep came down from a mountain. 'Umar said (to him): "Sell me one of the sheep." (The slave) said: "I am a slave and this is not my property." ('Umar) said: "Tell thy master that it was carried off by a wolf. How will he know?" (The slave) said: "But God will know even if my master does not." 'Umar wept and sought out his master and bought the slave from him and freed him, saying: "That one utterance of thine freed thee in this world and freed me in the next world."

EXCURSUS: [THE VIGILANCE OF THE TRULY RIGHTEOUS AND THE VIGILANCE OF THE ASCETICS]

Know that vigilance is of two types:

ONE is the vigilance of the truly righteous: their souls are immersed in the greatness of God Most High and are broken by His awesomeness. In them, there is no room for paying attention to other than He. This vigilance is brief. When the soul stands firm and the body's limbs are subservient, it refrains from the permitted things.¹⁶²⁹ How would it take to sinning? It has no need of remedy or stratagem to prevent the limbs. It was for this that the Messenger said: "*God spares him who has arisen and whose concerns are become one concern from the concerns of this world and the Hereafter.*" All the affairs are accomplished of a person who arises in the morning with one aim.

There is the person who is so immersed in this that if thou speakest to him, he will not hear and should a person come to him, even though his eyes are open, he does not see (him). 'Abd al-Wahid bin Zayd was asked: "Dost thou know anyone who in his own state is occupied with people?" He said: "I know one who is just coming." 'Utbah al-Ghulam entered. ('Abd al-Wahid) asked (him): "Didst thou see anyone

¹⁶²⁸ 'Abdullāh bin Dinār: Belonging to the 1st Islamic (7th CE) century, he narrated Traditions cited by Malik bin Anas, the founder of the Malikite school of religious jurisprudence.

¹⁶²⁹ "permitted things" (*mubāḥāt*): permitted, but neither lawful nor unlawful.

on the way?" He answered: "No one," though his way had been through the public market. John, the son of Zechariah, passed by a woman. He touched her with his hand and she fell on her face. He was asked: "Why did you do that?" He replied: "I thought that she was a wall." Someone says: "I passed by some people shooting arrows. One was sitting apart from them. I desired to converse with him, (but) he said: 'The remembrance of God Most High is better than talking.' I said: 'Art thou alone?' He answered: 'No, for God Most High and two angels are with me.' I said: 'Whom among these people is ahead (in the sport)?' He said: 'He whom God forgives.' I said: 'Which way is the road?' He turned his face to the heavens, stood up, and departed, saying: 'O Lord God, most [of Thy] people are diverted from Thee.'"

Shibli went to Abu al-Husayn Nuri.¹⁶³⁰ He saw him sitting quietly in vigilance, for not a single hair on his body was moving. (Shibli) asked: "From whom didst thou learn such excellent vigilance?" (Abu al-Husayn) replied: "From a cat. I saw him waiting by a mouse hole and he was stiller than this."

Abu 'Abdullah Khafif¹⁶³¹ says: "In Tyre, they pointed out to me an old man and a young man who continually sat in vigilance. I went there and saw two persons who were sitting facing the direction of prayer. I greeted them with "*peace*" three times, but they did not answer. I said: 'By God Most High, it is incumbent upon you to return a greeting.' The youth raised his head and said: 'O Bin Khafif, this world is little and of that little, no more than a little is left. From that little, take much as thy portion. O Bin Khafif, thou hast much leisure to engage in greeting us.' Having said this, he lowered his head. I was hungry and thirsty, but I forgot my hunger and thirst; they had seized my entirety. I stood and performed the noon and afternoon obligatory formal prayers with them. (Then) I said: 'Give me some counsel' He said: 'O Bin Khafif, we are the people of suffering; we do not possess the tongues of counsel.' I remained there for three days; neither did I eat anything, nor did I sleep. Then, I said to myself: 'I shall make them swear to give me some counsel.' I had not yet said anything when the youth raised his head and said: 'Seek the company of a person, the sight of whom will remind thee of God Most High, and whose awesomeness will fall upon

¹⁶³⁰ Abū al-Husayn Nūrī: Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Nuri. Mentioned by Qushayri, he died AH295/907-9CE. He was learned and eloquent. He said: "In our time, the most precious things are two: the scholar who practices his knowledge and the sage who speaks the truth."

¹⁶³¹ 'Abdullah Khafif: Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad bin al-Khafif of Shiraz. He was of royal descent. 'Attar and Hujwiri each have chapters about him and mention him in other places. He is also mentioned frequently by Qushayri. He counted five men in whom it was proper to have confidence and whom could be followed. Harith was the first. Others said that 'Abdullah was the sixth, a sign of his spiritual attainments. He died AH371/982CE.

thy soul and who will give thee counsel with the tongue of action, not with the tongue of speech.' *And peace!*"

This is the state and the degree of the vigilance of the truly righteous whose totality is immersed in God Most High.

THE SECOND DEGREE is the vigilance of the ascetics and the Companions of the Right Hand. These are people who know that God Most High is informed about them and before Whom they are ashamed. However, they have not become overwhelmed and immersed in the greatness and majesty of God Most High. Rather, they are aware of themselves and the states of the world. They are like the person who works alone or who keeps himself naked. A child appears. He is ashamed before (the child) and clothes himself of his own choice. The similitude of the other is that a king suddenly comes to him and he is filled with terror at (the king's) majestic presence. Unknowingly, he clothes himself. He leaps from his place and becomes overwhelmed by (the king's) majesty. Therefore, a person who is in this degree must always be vigilant over all his states, thoughts, and actions. In everything he desires to do, there are for it two examinations:

The first examination is before one does it. Perhaps, he listens for the first thought that appears in his soul. He is constantly vigilant about his soul and the thoughts that appear in it. He looks: if it is for God, he completes it; but if it is for the passion of the self, he stops and is ashamed before God Most High. He reproaches himself as to why this motive had appeared in himself. He acknowledges his disgrace in the Hereafter and its punishment. At the beginning of all thoughts, this vigilance is a religious obligation, for in the Traditions it is related that three ledgers are placed before the servant of God for his every voluntary movement and resting: one is for "why," another is for "how," and the third is for "for whom."

The meaning of the first: "Why?" It is that it is said that it is incumbent upon thee to do it for the sake of God Most High; or didst thou do it for the appetite of the self and in agreement with Satan?

If one comes through this safely and it has been for the sake of God, it is asked: "In what manner?" That is: "How didst thou do it?" For every right there is a prerequisite, a rule, and some knowledge. Didst thou do that which thou didst in accordance with the prerequisite of knowledge, or wert thou ignorantly lax?

If one comes through this safely and it has been done according to the conditions, it is asked: "For whom?" That is, it was necessary for thee to do it in sincerity and do it for God. If thou hast done it for Him, thou wilt obtain a reward, but if thou didst it for appearance and hypocritically, thou hast fallen subject to loathing and punishment. For, it has been said to thee: *Surely, pure religion is for God only.* (Q. 39:3)

And it was also said: *Lo! Those on whom ye call beside God are servants like unto you.* (Q. 7:194)

Whoever has recognized this, if he is wise, will not be neglectful in vigilance. The foundation of this is that he block the first thought, for if it continues, an inclination for it will appear. Then, that will change to resolve. Then, it will become a determination and spread to the limbs. The Messenger (S) said: "*Fear God at the time of thine intention when thou considerest doing something.*" When the intention for some act appears, restrain thyself for (fear of) God. Know that recognizing which of those thoughts are from God and which are from the passions of the self is a difficult and rare knowledge. A person who does not have this power (of discrimination) must always be in conversation with a pious learned person so that his lights will spread to him. One should avoid the learned who covet the world, for Satan has appointed them his viceroys.

God Most High revealed to David (A): "O David, beware of friendship with a learned person whose love for the world has intoxicated him, for he will lead thee away from loving Me. They are highwaymen (preying) on My servants." The Messenger (S) said: "God Most High loves the person who is sharp-sighted in the moment of doubt and is perfectly rational at the moment of the attack of the carnal appetite." There is perfection in both of these, for one recognizes the true nature of the circumstance with a penetrating vision and then repels the appetite with perfect wisdom. These two go together. Whoever does not have an intellect repelling appetite does not have penetrating vision in doubtful matters. About this, the Messenger (S) said: "The intellect has parted from whoever has committed a sin and will never return." Jesus (A) said: "There are three things to do: perform the plainly right, avoid the plainly wrong, and leave the obscure among them to the learned."

The second examination is the vigilance at the time of acting. Its states are not devoid of three kinds: either devotional, sinful, or permissible (but morally neutral).

Vigilance in the acts of devotion is that they be performed with sincerity and with the presence of the soul and with total respect for the rules. One should not refrain from adding anything to them that increases their moral excellence.

Vigilance in sinning is that one be ashamed and repent and busy oneself with atonement.

Vigilance in the permissible (but morally neutral) is that it be proper and that one see God Most High as the Benefactor in that blessing and know that one is in His Presence at all times. For example, if one sits, one should sit properly. If one lies down, one should lie on the right side and lie facing the direction of prayer. If, for example, one is eating food, the soul should not be free from meditation; for that is better than all other works. In every food, there are a number of the marvels of (His) artifice in the creation of (the food's) form, color, smell, taste, and shape;

and in the human members that are used in (eating) the food, such as the fingers, the mouth, the teeth, the throat, the stomach, the liver, and the kidneys, and that which is for the acceptance of the food and that which is for the keeping of the food so that it will be digested, and that which is for the elimination of the dregs.¹⁶³² All of these are the wonders of His making and meditation upon them is a great act of worship. This is the degree of the learned.

There are some who are thus: that when they see these wonders of (His) making, they progress to the greatness of the Maker and immerse themselves in His majesty, beauty, and perfection. This is the degree of the unitarians¹⁶³³ and the truly righteous. Some look upon food with the eye of anger and loathing, in opposition to appetite, and they look at their own need and busy themselves with: "Would to God we were not in need of (food)!" They meditate upon this necessity and are constantly vigilant about this matter. This is the degree of the ascetics.

And there are some who look at it with the eye of appetite and all of their thoughts come back to how they can manage to eat the best, the most delicious, and the most! Then, it may happen that they criticize the cooking, the cook, the fruit, or the food, not knowing that all of these are handiwork of God Most High, and criticism of (His) artifice is the criticism of the Maker. This is the degree of the heedless. These degrees appear in all permissible (but morally neutral) matters.

THE THIRD STATION IS RECKONING AFTER THE ACT

There must be a period of time at the end of the day, at the time of going to bed, when one reckons the account with one's self for the entire day, separating the capital from the profit and loss. The capital is the religious obligations; the profit is the voluntary acts of worship, and the loss is the sins. Just as one must bargain with one's partner so that one not be defrauded, one must exercise more caution with one's own self. For, the self is a rogue and is cunning, and there are many subterfuges. It counts its own purpose an act of devotion to (thy credit) so that thou imagine that it is a profit, while it may be that it is a loss. Indeed, with respect to all of the permissible (but morally neutral) things, one must question the accounting: "Why didst thou do that and for what didst thou do it?" Then, if one sees a loss upon one's self, it is debited to

¹⁶³² "the dregs" (*thufi*): a euphemism for bodily wastes.

¹⁶³³ "unitarians" (*muwahhidān*): believers in the absolute oneness of God: not to be confused with the modern religious denomination which originated among Protestant Christians in 18th CE century England, although in its original formulation—the denial of the Trinity and the godhood of Jesus—the Unitarian credo had much in common with the doctrines of Islam.

it and one seeks a reparation from it. Ibn al-Sammah¹⁶³⁴ was one of the saints. He reckoned his own account: it was sixty years. He reckoned the days: they were 21,500 days. He said: "Alas! If there be not more than one sin per day, how may I be delivered from 21,500 sins? Especially when there were days when there were a thousand sins!" Then, he cried out and fell down. They came to him and seized him; he was dead.

But the heedless person is he who does not take up his own accounting. If he threw a stone into his house for every sin he commits, in a short time the house would be filled with stones. If the Recording Angels were to request from him payment for their writing down (all of his sins), all that he possessed would go for that. But, if he negligently wishes to say "*Glory be to God*" a few times, he drapes a string of beads in his hand and tells them,¹⁶³⁵ and (then) he says: "I said it one hundred times," and he does this uselessly every day, and that when he has not dropped a bead in his hand so as to know whether he had passed a thousand! Then, if he hopes that the scale pan of good deeds must be heavier (for that), it is out of stupidity. It was for this that 'Umar said: "Weigh thine own deeds before they weigh thee down." When night fell, 'Umar would take a scourge and beat his feet and say: "What hast thou done today?" 'Ayishah says: "Abu Bakr said at the time of his death: 'No one is more beloved to me than 'Umar.' Then he said: 'What did I say?' I told him, he said: 'No, no one is dearer to me than he.' He had reviewed the calculation for this (statement) and since it was incorrect (in his view), he amended it."

Ibn Salam¹⁶³⁶ placed a load of firewood on his shoulders and went outside. They said: "Slaves do not do that." He said: "I am teaching my self how it is in this." Anas says: "I saw 'Umar in a courtyard behind a wall saying to himself: 'Bravo! They call thee the Commander of the Believers. By God, if thou fearest God; if not, thou hast made a punishment for thyself.'" Hasan Basri said: "*The censuring self* is that one censure oneself: thou hast done such-and-such and hast eaten such-and-such. Why didst thou do that and why didst thou eat that? One censures oneself." Therefore, the reckoning over past things is one of the necessities and is inescapable.

¹⁶³⁴ Ibn al-Sammah: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁶³⁵ "tells them": counts off the beads, as one does when reciting a rosary.

¹⁶³⁶ Ibn Salām: Muhammad bin Salam al-Jamhi, a 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century narrator mentioned by Ibn Khallikan with respect to Yunus bin Habib, the noted grammarian who died c. AH182/799CE.

THE FOURTH STATION: CONCERNING PUNISHMENT OF THE SELF

Know that when thou hast completed the reckoning of the self and it has committed some fault that thou passest over, it becomes emboldened and thou wilt not be able to catch up with it any more. Instead, thou must punish it for whatever it has done. If it has eaten something doubtful, punish it with hunger. If it has looked at someone not among the prohibited degrees,¹⁶³⁷ punish it by not looking and by closing the eyes, and (do) the same with all the body members. The forefathers did thus.

One of the spiritually insightful touched a woman. He put his hand in fire until it was burned. One of the worshippers among the Children of Israel spent some time in a hermitage. A woman displayed herself to him. He took a step outside of the hermitage to be nearer to her. Then he grew afraid of God Most High and he repented and made to return. He said: "No, this foot went out in sin and should not be taken back into the hermitage." He kept it that way (outside) until it was destroyed by cold and heat and fell off.

Junayd says: "Ibn al-Karibi¹⁶³⁸ said: 'One night I had a nocturnal emission. I wanted to perform the greater ablution immediately, (but) the night was cold and my self was lethargic and said: "Do not expose thyself to destruction. Wait until morning and go to the public bath." I swore not to bathe except with a ragged garment, and I would wet (that) and not wring it out so that it would dry on my body, and that is what I did. I said that this is suitable for such a self which commits shortcomings with respect to God Most High.'"

Someone gazed upon a woman and afterwards regretted that. He swore that punishment for this would be that he would never again drink cold water, and he never did. Hassan bin Abi Sinan¹⁶³⁹ passed by a scene and said: "Who has done this?" Then he said: "Why dost thou ask about something with which thou hast nothing to do? By God, I shall punish thee with a year's continuous fasting." Abu Talhah was performing a formal prayer in a grove of date palms. A bird appeared (before him). Its beauty diverted him and he became doubtful about the number of bows

¹⁶³⁷ That is, if one looks at someone of the opposite sex with whom marriage is not forbidden. Since marriage with parents, grandparents, sons and daughters, siblings, etc., is prohibited ("the prohibited degrees"), looking at them does not imply any sexual interest or intent.

¹⁶³⁸ Ibn al-Karibi: Possibly, the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century Abu Ibn Karib, or Kurayb, or Karnab, al-Darir, otherwise unknown, who was the putative founder of a heretical sect which expected the return of Abu Hanifah and denied his death; or more probably a mistake for a teacher of Junayd by name of Ibn al-Karnabi. *Karnab* and *karib/kurayb* have the same general shape in Arabic script with a difference of a dot or so.

¹⁶³⁹ Hassān bin Abī Sinān: Qushayri mentions him as narrator of anecdotes about Hasan al-Basri and Thabit al-Bunani. Also, see Note 901 on Hassan bin Sinan.

(he had performed). For that reason, he gave away that date-grove in charity.

Malik bin Daygham says: "Ribah al-Qaysi¹⁶⁴⁰ came looking for my father after the afternoon obligatory formal prayer. I told him that he was sleeping. He said: 'What a time for sleeping!' and turned back. I went after him. He was saying: 'Thou spokest impertinently: "What a time for sleeping!" What business is it of thine? I have sworn not to lay my head upon a pillow for year.' As he was proceeding, he was weeping and saying: 'Wilt thou also not fear God Most High?'"

One night, Tamim Dari¹⁶⁴¹ was asleep and missed the night formal prayer. He vowed not to sleep any night for a year.

Talhah (R) relates: "A man stripped himself and rolled himself on small hot stones saying: 'O lazy carrion by night and idle by day, how long (must I endure) thee?' The Messenger (S) approached him and asked: 'Why art thou doing thus?' He answered: 'My self dominates me.' (The Messenger) said: 'At this moment the gates of heaven have been opened for thee and God Most High and the angels take pride in thee.' Then he said to the Companions: 'Take thy provision from him.' They all went and said (to the man): 'Supplicate on our behalf.' He did so, one by one, and the Messenger (S) said (to him): 'Supplicate for all collectively.' He said: 'O Lord God, make piety their provision and keep all of them on the straight path.' And the Messenger (S) said: 'O Lord God, direct him to the right way': that is, so that a better supplication would come upon his tongue. (The man) said: 'O Lord God, make Paradise their resting place!'"

There was a concourse of the great. One of them looked up at a rooftop and saw a woman. He vowed never again to look at the sky. At night, Ahnaf Qays (R) would pick up a lamp and always hold his finger on the (flame of the) lamp, saying: "On such-and-such a day why didst thou do such-and-such a thing and why didst thou eat such-and-such food?" Thus were the resolute. They knew that the self is rebellious. If thou dost not discipline it, it will overpower thee and destroy thee. They were harsh with it.

¹⁶⁴⁰ Ribah al-Qaysi: Ribāḥ bin 'Amr al-Qaysī. Mentioned by Qushayri.

¹⁶⁴¹ Tamim Dārī: Tamim bin Aws al-Dari, a Companion of the Prophet of northern origin. He converted to Islam during the time of the Prophet, living in Madinah until the murder of Caliph 'Uthman, but his family remained Christian. Before the prohibition of alcoholic drinks, he was a wine merchant. He was appointed governor of *Bayt al-Maqdis*, which usually refers to Jerusalem, but could mean, in this case, Hebron, with which he has associations. He was reputedly the first to dedicate himself to sermonizing at the mosque with illustrative stories and exegesis. He died AH40/660-ICE, or earlier. (EI)

THE FIFTH STATION IS EARNEST STRIVING

Know that some have noticed a laziness in their selves. They have punished them for that by forcing them to perform many acts of worship. As for Ibn 'Umar, whenever he would miss a congregational formal prayer, he would remain awake that night until the day. As for 'Umar, he missed a congregational formal prayer and he gave away property in charity worth two hundred thousand dirhams. Ibn 'Umar was late for the sunset prayer so that two stars had appeared: he manumitted a slave. There are many such stories. When the self is not obedient in worship, the remedy is that one converse with an earnest striver in the faith¹⁶⁴² so that one may become desirous by seeing him. Someone says: "Whenever I become lazy in worship, I look into the earnest striving of Muhammad bin Wasi' and the desire for worship stays with me for a week. Consequently, if one does not find such a person, one should read the states and stories of the earnest strivers in faith. We shall refer to some of them:

Dawud Tayi would not eat bread. He would moisten bits of bread in a bowl and drink it. He would say: "Between that and this which I eat one can recite fifty verses of the Quran. Why should I waste time?" Someone said to him: "A beam of thy roof is cracked." He said: "I have been in this house for twenty years and have not looked at that." He loathed looking (at anything) as useless.

Ahmad (bin) Razin¹⁶⁴³ sat from morning to the afternoon formal prayer without looking in any direction. He was asked: "Why dost thou do this?" He replied: "God Most High created the eye for looking at the marvels of His creation and His greatness. An error will be recorded against whoever does not look to take a lesson." Abu al-Darda (R) says: "I love life for only three reasons: prostration during long nights, thirst during long days, and sitting with people whose speech is all excellence and wisdom."

'Alqamah bin Qays¹⁶⁴⁴ was asked: "Why dost thou keep thy self in such torment?" He replied: "Out of the love I have for it I keep it from hell." They said: "Thou art not obligated to do all of this." He said: "I do what I am able to do so that tomorrow there will be no regrets as to why I

¹⁶⁴² "earnest striver in the faith" (*mujtahid*): The word *mujtahid* here means a striver in a general sense. It is also used in a technical sense, especially amongst the Shiah, to designate a person qualified to issue opinions on religious law and morality and, in that sense, is similar to the *mufti*, the more common term for this among the Sunnis, one who is qualified to issued similar opinion.

¹⁶⁴³ Ahmad bin Razin: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁶⁴⁴ 'Alqamah bin Qays: 'Alqamah bin Qays al-Aswad, he was an Iraqi jurisprudent famous for his piety and knowledge of Traditions. He died about AH61/681CE.

had not done it." Junayd says: "I have not seen anyone more remarkable than Sari Saqati. He lived ninety-eight years and no one saw his side on the ground except at the time of death." Abu Muhammad Jariri¹⁶⁴⁵ stayed in Makkah for a year without speaking or sleeping. He did not lean his back (against anything), nor did he stretch out his legs. Abu Bakr Kattani said to him: "How wert thou able to do that?" He answered: "My inner self knew the truth and my outer self gave the strength."

Someone says: "I saw Fath Mawsili weeping, his tears mixed with blood. I asked: 'What is this?' He said: 'For a time I wept water for my sins, now I weep blood for those of my own tears which were not sincere.'" He was seen in a dream. They said: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He has made me dear because of those weepings, and He said: 'By My Might, the angels have been bringing the record of thy deeds to Me for forty years in which there is no error.'"

Dawud Tayi was asked: "What would happen if thou combed thy mustache and thy beard?" He said: "Then I would be finished with the manliness that I have been cultivating." Uways Qarani used to divide the nights. He would say: "Tonight is the night of bowing," and he would remain in a single bow until dawn. The next night, he would say: "Tonight is the night of prostration," and he would remain in a single prostration until dawn. 'Utbah al-Ghulam would not consume any fine food or drink because of his great striving. His mother said to him: "Be kind to thy self." He said: "I seek kindness for it. It must endure hardship for a few days to be everlastingly in ease and kindness."

Rabi' said: "I went to see Uways Qarani. He was performing the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer. When he finished, I said (to myself) that I should not speak to him until he has finished the glorification. I continued waiting but, of course, he did not rise from his place until he performed the noon obligatory formal prayer and the afternoon obligatory formal prayer. It continued thus until the pre-dawn obligatory formal prayer of the following morning, and his eyes became sleepy. He came out of the sleep and cried: 'O Lord God! I seek refuge with Thee from my very sleepy eyes and my gluttonous stomach.' I said: 'I have seen enough of him for myself,' and I went back."

Abu Bakr 'Ayyash¹⁶⁴⁶ did not lay his side upon the ground for forty years. Then, black fluid came in his eyes and he kept that secret from his family for twenty years. Performing five hundred bows of

¹⁶⁴⁵ Abu Muhammad Jariri: Ahmad bin Muhammad bin al-Husayn al-Jariri. 'Attar devotes a chapter to him. Qushayri notes that he was one of the greatest of Junayd's disciples and his successor. He died AH31/923-4CE.

¹⁶⁴⁶ Abū Bakr 'Ayyāsh: He narrates an anecdote about Dawud Tayi in *Tadhikarat al-Awliya'*, thus placing him in the 2nd Islamic (8th CE) century. ('Attar)

formal prayer every day used to be his practice. In his youth, he would recite *Say, He is God, the One*¹⁶⁴⁷ three thousand times a day.

Kurz bin Wabrah¹⁶⁴⁸ was one of the saints. He strove to be so that he would recite the entire Quran three times a day. They said to him: "Thou hast given thyself a lot of trouble." He said: "How long is the life of this world?" They said: "Seven thousand years."¹⁶⁴⁹ He said: "How long will the Day of Resurrection last?" They said: "Fifty thousand years." He said: "Who is there who would not endure hardship for seven days to rest for fifty days? That is, if we live for seven thousand years and I strive for the Day of Resurrection, it is still little, in comparison with that which is without end, especially with this meager life span that I have."

Sufyan Thawri says: "One evening I went to Rabi'ah. She had gone into the prayer niche in order to perform formal prayer until the day(break) and I was performing formal prayer in a corner of the room until the pre-dawn. Then, I said: 'How should we give thanks for His giving us the divine favor of spending the night in formal prayer?' She said: 'By our fasting tomorrow.'"

These are the states of the earnest strivers. There are many of these and relating them would be lengthy. We have cited more of them in *The Revival*. If a servant of God does not achieve these states, at all events, he should hear them in order to recognize his own shortcomings and so that the desire for goodness move in him and he able to stand up against his self.

THE SIXTH STATION: CONCERNING REPROVING THE SELF AND REPRIMANDING IT

Know that this self has been so created that it flees goodness and indulges in evil. Its nature is slothfulness and the satisfying of its appetites. Thou hast been charged with turning it away from these qualities and bringing it back from straying to the (straight) path. Some of this may be accomplished by harshness with it, some by gentleness, some by action, and some by words; for it has been so created in its nature that when it sees its own good in some matter, it heads for that, even though there be hardship which it may endure. However, most often its veil¹⁶⁵⁰ is ignorance and heedlessness. When thou awakenest it from the sleep of heedlessness, and thou holdest a bright mirror to its face, it will accept that. It is concerning this that God Most High said: *And warn, for warning profiteth the believers.* (Q. 51:55)

¹⁶⁴⁷ That is, the 112th Chapter of the Quran which begins with those words.

¹⁶⁴⁸ Kurz bin Wabrah: Qushayri relates an anecdote about him.

¹⁶⁴⁹ It was thought that the world would last seven thousand years.

¹⁶⁵⁰ The veil separating the self from righteousness.

Thy self has been created of the same stuff as the selves of others. In the end, counsel and reprimand will influence it. Therefore, first counsel thine own self and reprove it; in fact, never cease reproving and reprimanding it. Say to it: "O self! Thou claimest to be clever and thou becomest angry if someone says thou art a fool, but who is more foolish than thou? If a person occupies himself in play and laughter at the time that an army is at the city gates waiting for him and someone has been sent to carry him off and destroy him while he is engaged in amusements, who would be more foolish than he? And the army of the dead is waiting at the city gate. They have vowed not to leave until they have taken thee off. Hell and heaven have been created for thee and it is possible that thou will be carried off on this very day! If they do not carry thee off today, they will do it tomorrow. Assume that that which will be done has been done. Death does not make an appointment (saying): 'I shall come by night or by day, or I shall come late or early, or I shall come in winter or in summer.' He seizes one suddenly and takes one at a time when one feels most secure. If thou art not prepared for him, what foolishness is there greater than that? *Woe unto thee, O self!*"

Every day thou art engaged in sins. If thou supposest that God does not see, thou art an unbeliever. If thou knowest that He sees, thou are very impudent and shameless, for thou dost not fear His awareness of that. If one of thy slaves acted so disobediently with respect to thee, look at how thine anger would be against him! So, how hast thou become immune from the anger of God? If thou imaginest that thou possessest the strength to endure His punishment, thrust thy finger into a (burning) lamp, or sit in the sun for an hour, or make thy residence in the hot chamber of the public bath until thou perceivest thine own helplessness and weakness. Or, thou supposest that thou wilt not be seized for whatever thou doest! As a result, thou art a denier of the Quran and God Most High and consider one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets (R) to be liars who say: *He who doeth wrong will have the recompense thereof.* (Q. 4:123) *Whoever does evil will see evil. Woe unto thee!*

Surely, thou sayest: "He is Generous and Compassionate and He will not punish me." Why does he keep one hundred million people in hunger, sickness, and hardship? Why does he who does not sow not reap? Why, when some carnal appetite comes to thee, dost thou employ all the stratagems on the face of the earth (to satisfy it)? Thou mayest obtain it, but do not say God is Compassionate. Does He Himself arrange my affairs without my own troubling (about them)? *Woe unto thee!*

Surely, thou sayest: "This is the way it is, but I do not have the strength to endure the trouble." Dost thou not know that taking some trouble is more obligatory for a person who cannot endure (the trouble) in order to escape the sorrow of hell tomorrow? Whoever does not suffer will not escape suffering, for if thou hast not the strength to endure this amount of hardship today, how wilt thou find the strength to endure the

suffering of hell, degradation, abjectness, being driven, and accursedness? *Woe unto thee!*

Why dost thou endure so much suffering and wretchedness in the pursuit of silver and gold? Dost thou abstain from all thy carnal appetites in seeking physical well-being at the word of an ignorant doctor? Thou dost not know this much: that hell is harder than poverty and illness, for the length of time of the Hereafter is longer than the life span of the world. *Woe unto thee!*

Surely, thou sayest: "I plan to repent and take up some activity better than this." It may be that while thou art thinking about this, death suddenly appears and those regrets will remain in thy hands. If thou supposest that it will be easier to repent tomorrow than it is today, it is ignorance. For, however much more thou delayest, it will be (that much) more difficult. Then, when death approaches, it will be as though, for example, it were said at the base of a difficult mountain pass, there is no profit in feeding the beasts of burden any barley. Thou art like the person who travels to acquire learning. He is indolent in his learning and says: "On the last day, when I am going to return to my city, I shall make the effort and learn some knowledge." He does not know this much that the acquisition of knowledge requires a long time. In the same way, the treacherous self must be placed in the crucible of repentance and earnest striving until it is purified in order for it to achieve the degree of spiritual insight, intimacy, and love, and to cross all of the obstacles of the path. If life has passed and been wasted, how canst thou do this without a reprieve? Why dost thou not consider youth a windfall before old age, good health before sickness, leisure before labor, wealth before poverty, and life before death? *Woe unto thee!*

Why dost thou provide for the winter in the summer and not delay, and why dost thou not have faith in the grace and generosity of God Most High? Well, the intense cold of hell is not less than the frigidity of winter,¹⁶⁵¹ and the heat of hell is not less than the heat of summer. Thou dost not commit shortcomings in all of these affairs (of the world) and (yet) thou so doest with respect to the matter of the Hereafter! No, certainly, there is a reason for thy not having faith in the Day of Resurrection and the Hereafter. Thou hast this unbelief inside thee and thou concealest it from thyself. This will be the cause of thine eternal perdition. *Woe unto thee!*

Whoever supposes that, without going into the protection of the light of spiritual insight, the fire of carnal appetite after death will not blaze in his soul is as though he supposes that without being in the protection of a heavy cloak, the cold of winter will, by the grace and

¹⁶⁵¹ The winters of the Iranian plateau where Al-Ghazzali was born and died can be extremely cold and snowy.

generosity of God Most High, not approach his skin! He does not understand this much: that His grace is that since He had created winter, He has shown thee the way to a cloak and created the cloak and arranged the materials for it, not that He would ward off the cold (from thee) without (thy wearing) a cloak. *Woe unto thee!*

Do not think that sin leads thee to punishment because God Most High is angered at thy refractoriness, so that thou say: "What harm has my sinning done to Him?" It is not thus. Rather, the fire of hell is also produced inside thee by thy carnal appetites, just as thy sickness in thy body is produced by thine eating a poison or harmful things, not because the physician becomes angry because of thine opposition to his instructions. *Woe unto thee!*

It is not other than that thou hast settled down with the world's pleasures and ease and, in thy soul, thou hast become tied to it and hast become its lover. If thou dost not believe in hell and heaven, thou certainly believest in death. All of this will be taken back from thee and thou shalt burn in thy longing for (that which thou hast lost). Make firmer the love for that in thy soul as much as thou desirest, for the sorrow of separation is proportionate to the love. *Woe unto thee!*

What dost thou hold on to in the world? If the entire world is given to thee from the east to the west, and all prostrate themselves before thee, after a time, thou and they will become dust that no one will remember, just as monarchs of the past are not remembered. When nothing but a little of the world will be given to thee, and that too loathsome and distressing, thou sellest everlasting Paradise for this! *Woe unto thee!*

How thou wouldst laugh if someone were to buy broken pottery with a night-illuminating jewel! The world is breakable pottery; consider it suddenly smashed. Consider that eternal jewel is lost and consider that the regret remains!¹⁶⁵² Reprimand the self with these and their like so that thou will have done right by it, and thou will have begun thy sermon with thy self. *Peace!*

¹⁶⁵² "The world...remains!" following AA's text. HK has: "The world is breakable pottery and will inevitably be broken. Consider that the eternal jewel is lost and consider that the regret remains!"

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCERNING MEDITATION

Know that the Messenger (S) has said: "*An hour's meditation is better than a year's worship.*" One hour of reflection is better than the worship of one year! There are many places in the Quran in which meditation, consideration, contemplation, and reflection¹⁶⁵³ have been commanded. All of these are meditation. Whoever recognizes the merit of meditation, but who does not know its true nature, and its quality and manner, does not know what this meditation is about, why it is, and what its fruit is. Consequently, an exposition of this is important. We shall first discuss its virtue; then, its true nature; then, that meditation is for the sake of Him; and then, that meditation is about Him.

THE VIRTUE OF MEDITATION

Know that that the degree of an act, one hour of which is better and more meritorious than a year of worship, is tremendous. Ibn 'Abbas (R) says: "Some people were meditating about God Most High. The Messenger (S) said: 'Meditate upon His creation and do not meditate upon Him, for ye do not have the strength to endure that and cannot know its magnitude.'" 'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) was performing formal prayer at night and weeping. I asked: 'Why dost thou weep, O Messenger of God when thy sins have been forgiven?' He replied: 'Why should I not weep when this verse has been revealed to me: *Lo! In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens for the understanding.*' (Q. 3:190) Then he said: 'Woe unto him who reads this and does not meditate upon it.'"

Jesus (A) was asked: "Is there anyone on the face of the earth like thee, O Spirit of God?" He said: "There is; anyone whose speech is all remembrance (of God) and whose silence is all thinking, and his looking is all the taking of a lesson. He is like me." Our Messenger (S) said: "Give your eyes a portion of worship." They said: "How?" He said: "(By) reading the Quran from the Book and meditating upon Him and taking lessons from His wonders." Abu Sulayman Darani said:

¹⁶⁵³ "reflection" (*i'tibār*): This is not the usual Persian meaning of the word, but is an Arabic definition. *I'tibār* is the verbal noun of the (Arabic) verb *ya'tabir* which, in addition to the meanings of "to take warning, deem, regard, esteem," etc., also has the meaning of "to consider, weigh, reflect upon, take into account," etc., meanings not stressed in modern Persian. Ghazzali frequently uses technical Arabic words in their Arabic meaning, whereas the Persian meaning may have deviated somewhat from that over time. While both Arabic and Persian are conservative languages in comparison with English, Arabic—because perhaps of the role of the Quran in its development—is the more conservative of the two.

"Meditation concerning the world is the veil of the Hereafter. The fruit of meditation upon the Hereafter is wisdom and the life of souls." One night on the roof of his house, Dawud Tayi was meditating upon the kingdom of the heavens and weeping so that he descended (by mistake) into the house of his neighbor. His neighbor jumped up and seized a sword; he thought it was a thief. When he saw him, he said: "Who threw thee down here?" (Dawud) answered: "I was unaware; I do not know."

THE TRUE NATURE OF MEDITATION

Know that the meaning of meditation is seeking knowledge. Every (kind of) knowledge that does not become evident spontaneously must be sought. Seeking it is not possible unless thou puttest two spiritual realizations together and reconcile them so that they are mated together and from those two realizations they produce a third realization, just as a child is produced from between male and female. Those two realizations are like two roots for the third realization. Then, this third realization is also joined with another so that a fourth appears from it. And so, it goes on generating and knowledge is increased infinitely. If anyone is unable to acquire knowledge in this manner, it is because he does not take the path of those sciences which are basic. He is like the person who has no capital, how can he engage in trade? If one knows (the realizations), but does not know to join them together, he is like the person who has capital but does not know how to engage in business. The exposition of this truth is lengthy. Let us relate an allegory concerning this meditation, and it is thus:

A person wants to know whether the Hereafter is better than this world. He cannot know this until he knows two things about the world: One is that the everlasting is better than the transitory, and the other is that he know that the Hereafter is everlasting while this world is transitory. Therefore, when he has learned these two principles, the knowledge that the Hereafter is better than this world will necessarily be engendered. We do not intend by engendering what the Mu'tazilites intend by it.¹⁶⁵⁴ The explanation of this would also be lengthy.

Therefore, the true nature of all meditation is the seeking of the knowledge that appears from the summoning of two pieces of knowledge. However, just as when two horses mate they do not produce a sheep, so just any two items of knowledge do not engender just any

¹⁶⁵⁴ Ghazzali is referring to the Mu'tazilite doctrine of "generated effects" (*tawallud*), which concerns the question of human responsibility for acts and that, superficially at least, contradicts the assertion of predestination. The Mu'tazilites believed in free will: how else could a man be responsible for his acts? The doctrine of *tawallud* asserts that the effects of an act are attributable to him who performs it and he remains responsible for it, even after his death. (SEI, Watt, Rahman)

knowledge thou mayest desire. Instead, for every kind of knowledge there are two more roots. If thou dost not prepare those two roots in the soul, the branch does not appear.

DISCLOSING WHY MEDITATION IS NECESSARY

Know that a human being is created in darkness and in ignorance. He is in need of a light that comes from outside of that darkness and knows the way to its task as to what must be done and in which direction he should go: to this world or the Hereafter; and whether he must be occupied with himself or with God. This is not discernible, except with the light of spiritual insight, and this light of spiritual insight appears from meditation. As it is related in the Traditions: *"God created mankind in darkness; then He sprinkled them with His light."* As when a person becomes helpless in the dark and cannot find his way, he strikes a stone on iron so that from that, the illumination of the sparks will appear and he may light the lamp. With that lamp, his condition changes and he regains his sight and discriminates the (correct) way from the wrong way. Then, he starts to walk. In the same way, this is an allegory of the two basic pieces of knowledge: they are put together so that a third knowledge may be born, as with the stone and the iron. The allegory of meditation is the striking of the iron with the stone. The allegory of the spiritual insight is the light which appears so as to change the state of the soul. When the state changes, the task and the work change. And when one sees, for example, that the Hereafter is better, he turns his back on the world and faces towards the Hereafter.

Therefore, meditation is for three things: a spiritual insight, a state, and a task. But, the task follows upon the state, and the state follows upon the spiritual insight, and the spiritual insight follows upon meditation. As a result, meditation is the root and key to all good things, and its virtue appears with this.

DISCLOSING THE SPHERE OF THOUGHT: IN WHAT DOES IT LIE AND WHERE DOES IT GO?

Know that the range and sphere of thought is limitless, for there is no limit for studies, and thought flows in all. However, it is not our purpose to expound upon all that is not related to the way of religion. As for that which is related to the way of religion, even if the details of that are limitless, it is possible, nonetheless, to discuss its sum total and its kinds.

Know that we intend by the way of religion the intercourse between the servant of God and God Most High, for that is his way to reach God. The meditation of the servant of God is about himself or

about God. If it is about God, (it is) either about His essence, or about His attributes, or about His acts, marvels, and handiwork. If he meditates upon himself, (it is) either about the qualities which are disliked by God and which distance him from God—and they are sins and Destroyers; or (it is) about that which is loved by God which brings him closer to Him, and they are acts of devotion and the Deliverers. Hence, the sum total of this is four spheres of activity. The servant of God is like the lover whose thought does not leave his beloved for any reason. If it does so, his love is deficient; for, love is total and there is no room left for anything else. So, his thought is about the beauty of the beloved and her beautiful form, or about her deeds and character. If he thinks about himself, either he does so to make himself more acceptable to his beloved and to seek (the means for) that, or (he thinks) about that in himself which displeases (his beloved) and (how) to avoid that.¹⁶⁵⁵ Every thought that is according to the rule of love is not outside of these four. The thought of love for religion and the friendship of God Most High is the same.

THE FIRST SPHERE: It is that one think about oneself (to discover) what characteristics and deeds are repugnant to Him so that one may cleanse oneself of them. These are the external sins or the criminal traits inside one, and they are many. For, some of the external sins are related to the members of the body, such as the tongue, the eyes, the hands, etc., and some to the entire body. The internal malignancies are the same. There are three areas for thought in each one of these: first, as to whether such-and-such a deed or such-and-such a trait is repugnant or not; this is not always clear, but may be known through meditation. Second, whether I have this trait, if is repugnant, or not. The traits of the soul are not easily recognized either. Third, if (I) have this (repugnant) trait, what can be done to be liberated from it?

Therefore, one must meditate about this an hour every morning. One first thinks about the external sins. One thinks about the tongue that will be afflicted with speech this day. It may fall into backbiting or lying. One considers the plan as to how one may avoid this. In the same way, if it is in danger of (consuming) an unlawful food, how may one avoid this? One must investigate each of the bodily members in the same way. One must also consider all acts of devotion. When one has finished this, one should think about the good qualities in order to implement them. For example, one says: "The tongue has been created for remembrance (of God) and the ease of the Muslims. I am able to perform such-and-such a

¹⁶⁵⁵ I have made the object of love feminine in accordance with modern English convention, however, the corresponding Arabic passage in *The Revival* uses the masculine. Since Ghazzali has repeatedly condemned the physical aspects of homosexual love, one can only presume that here he is referring to intense friendship and perhaps what is now called "male bonding."

remembrance and utter such-and-such pleasing words so that I give peace to a person. The eyes have been created to be the net of religion by which one catches (spiritual) happiness. With these eyes, I look upon such-and-such a learned man with the eye of respect and I look at such-and-such a sinner with the eye of contempt, so that I will have done right by (my) eyes. Wealth has been created for the ease of the Muslims, so that I give such-and-such wealth in charity and if I have a need, I shall be patient and be generous."

One should reflect upon these and their like every day. It may happen that with an hour's reflection, an idea occur that keeps one from sinning for one's entire life. It is this kind of meditation which is better than the worship of a year, because its benefit lasts one's entire lifetime. When one has meditated upon the outward acts of devotion and sins, one turns to the inward and contemplates one's character, as to what is inside one and what the Deliverers are and which of them one does not have in order to seek them out. This too is lengthy, but the true Destroyers are ten. If one obtains release from these ten, it is complete: miserliness, pride, vanity, hypocrisy, envy, quick temper, gluttony, garrulousness, the love for wealth, and love for rank. The Deliverers are ten: repentance,¹⁶⁵⁶ regret for sins, patience in adversity, satisfaction with (God's) decree, gratitude for blessings, regarding fear and hope as equal, asceticism in this world, sincerity in acts of devotion, a good nature with mankind, and the love for God Most High.

There is much scope for thought in each one of these and the gates are wide open for a person to learn the lore of these attributes, as we have discussed in this book. A servant of God should keep a journal for himself in which he writes down these qualities. When he has finished dealing with one, he may cross it off and busy himself with another quality. It may happen that some of these thoughts with which one is afflicted are more important for one person (than for another). For example, the humble savant who has been delivered from all of this usually is not devoid of some vanity with regard to his knowledge, and he may seek fame and rank by declaring it. He regards his own worship and appearance adorned in the eyes of the people and he may delight in his popularity. If someone sneers at him, rancor seizes his soul and he busies himself with retaliation.

All of these are crimes, but they are more obscure, and they are all the seeds of the corruption of faith. Therefore, every day he must think about this so as to flee from it and make the presence or absence of people equal to him, so that his looking is all at God. There is much opportunity for thought in this.

¹⁶⁵⁶ "repentance" (*tawbah*) is omitted in the Persian mss., but HK adds it by analogy to the Arabic text of *The Revival*, to make up the missing tenth point. AA does not add it.

So, from all this it is clear that there is no end for the mediation of the servant of God upon his own qualities of these two types, (the outward and the inward). However, it is not possible to elaborate further.

THE SECOND SPHERE IS MEDITATION UPON GOD MOST HIGH. Meditation (upon God) is either about His essence and attributes, or about His acts and handiworks; and the greatest station is meditation upon His essence and attributes. However, if people do not have the strength for that and their intellects not comprehend it, the Religious Law has forbidden it and has said: "*Do not meditate about that for truly ye have not the strength for its magnitude.*" This difficulty is not because of the concealment of the majesty of God; rather, it is from its radiance. It is intensely bright, while human vision is weak and cannot support it. Instead, one becomes stupefied and perplexed at it, just as the bat does not fly by day because its eyes are weak. It does not possess the strength to endure the brilliance of the sun and cannot see by day. At evening, when a little bit of the light of the sun remains, it (can) see. The common folk of mankind are at this level. However, the truly righteous and the saints have the strength for this sight, but not continuously. For they will become weakened, as when people look at the sun's disc, but if they prolong this, it is feared that they will become blind. In the same way, in this looking (at the majesty of God) there is the fear of stupefaction. Consequently, it is not allowed to disclose to the people that which the saints know about the truths of the attributes of God Most High, except in words which are close to the attributes of mankind, as, for example, thou wouldst say: scholar, disciple, and scholastic theologian. He comprehends something of these things, both from the nature of his own attributes and that which is allegorical. However, this much must be said, that His speech is not like thy speech, which has letters and sounds and which has the linkage and separation (of words). When thou sayest this, it maybe that (the listener) not have the power to (comprehend) this and deny it; just as if thou sayest to him, His essence is not like thine essence, for it has neither substance, nor breadth. It is neither in a place, nor on a place. Neither does it have direction, nor is it connected to the world, nor is it separated from it. Neither is it exterior to the world, nor is it within it. (The listener) will deny this and say that it is inherently impossible, because he compares that with himself. He cannot understand any greatness) from this, because the greatness (the people) have seen they consider to be the greatness of monarchs who sit upon thrones and who also have slaves standing before them.

Then, in the same way, they suppose something imaginary with respect to Him, so that it may be they say that He would certainly have hands, feet, eyes, ears, a mouth, and a tongue, because they have seen these in themselves. They suppose that if He does not have them, it would be a defect! If a fly had the same intelligence that these people

have, it would say the Creator would necessarily have feathers and wings, for it is absurd that I have something that is my strength and power that He does not have!

Therefore, a man too, in the same way, makes analogy of all matters with himself. For this reason, the Law forbade this thought and the forefathers forbade scholastic theology and did not consider it permissible to say that He is not in the world and not outside of the world, or He is not connected, and not separated. They were content with this: *Nothing is like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.* (Q. 42:11) Nothing resembles Him.¹⁶⁵⁷ They said this in general, not in detail. They considered speaking (about this) in detail heresy. For this reason, the intellects of most people cannot comprehend it either. Because of this, revelation came to some of the prophets: "Do not inform My servants about My attributes for they will deny them. Say this to them, that they cannot be comprehended." Therefore, it is preferable that this not be discussed, nor should it be meditated upon, except by a person who is perfect. And then, too, he will necessarily fall into perplexity and stupefaction at the end.

Consequently, His greatness must be sought in the marvels of His handiwork, for whatever is in existence is all light from the lights of His power and His greatness. Though a person does not have the strength to look at the sun, he does have the strength to look at that (portion) of His light that has fallen upon the earth.

DISCLOSING MEDITATION CONCERNING THE WONDERS OF GOD MOST HIGH'S CREATION

Know that everything in existence is all His handiwork. All is wondrous and strange. There is not an atom of the atoms of the heavens and the earth that does not glorify and sanctify its own Creator in the language of signs, saying: "Well done! A power in perfection! Well done! A knowledge without end!" This is much greater than could accept a detailed explanation. Instead, if all the seas became ink and all the trees became pens, and all created things became scribes who write during long lives, that which they write would be a very small part of that which is. As He said: *Say: Though the sea became ink for the words of my Lord, verily the sea would be used up before the words of my Lord were exhausted.* (Q. 18:109)

But on the whole, created things are of two kinds: One kind is that of which we have no knowledge and upon which we cannot meditate. As He said: *Glory be to Him Who created all the pairs, of that*

¹⁶⁵⁷ For this reason, God cannot be represented by paintings and statues.

which the earth groweth, and of themselves, and of that which they know not! (Q. 36:36)

As for that of which we are aware, there are two kinds: One is that which cannot be seen by the eye, such as the Throne, the angels, devils, fairies, and their classes. Meditation upon these is also difficult.

So we must confine ourselves to that which is visible, and that is the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth and that which is upon it, such as mountains, seas, deserts, towns, and that which is in the mountains of ores and minerals, and that which is upon the earth of different kinds of plants and animals other than human beings—when we come to man, he is more remarkable than all—and all that is between heaven and earth, such as clouds, rain, snow, hail, lightning, thunder, the rainbow, and the signs that appear in the air.

Thus, this is the sum and total. In each one of them, there is scope for meditation, for all are marvels of God Most High's handiwork. So let us refer briefly to some of them. All of them are signs of God Most High at which thou hast been commanded to look and meditate upon, as He said: *How many a portent is there in the heavens and the earth which they pass by with face averted!* (Q. 12:105) And He said: *Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth and what things God hath created?* (Q. 7:185) And He said: *Lo! In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens for the understanding;*¹⁶⁵⁸ (Q. 3:190) There are many such verses. Therefore, meditate upon these signs:

THE FIRST SIGN IS THAT THOU ART CLOSEST TO THYSELF and there is nothing on the face of the earth more marvelous than thou, yet thou art heedless of thyself. A Cry comes: "Look down upon thyself to see Our greatness and majesty!" *And in yourselves: Can ye then not see?* (Q. 51:21)

So, meditate upon thyself at first as to whence (thou camest). At first, He created thee from a droplet of fluid, and He made the first residence for that droplet the loins of thy father and the breast of thy mother. He made earth of thy mother's womb and He made a seed from thy father's spine. After that, He made the seed of thy creation. Then He appointed passion to the male and female so that the seed would be sown in the earth. Then, He made the menstrual blood irrigate that seed and created thee from a drop of semen and menstrual blood. First, some blood congeals, then it becomes flesh, that which is called the fetus.

¹⁶⁵⁸ It should be pointed out that the Arabic word *āyah* has the more general meaning of "sign." As the verses of the Quran are considered signs of God's mercy and concern for mankind, the verses are also called *āyah* (pl. *āyāt*). Al-Ghazzali uses the word in both meanings in this passage.

Then, He breathed life into it. Then, from that simple¹⁶⁵⁹ blood and liquid, He caused a multitude of things to appear in thee such as skin, flesh, veins, sinews, and bones. Then, from all of these, He gave form to thy limbs. He created a round head, two long arms and long legs and at the end of each, (limb) five branches.¹⁶⁶⁰ Then, on the exterior, He created eyes, ears, a mouth, a nose, a tongue and the other organs; and inside thee, the stomach, the kidneys, the liver, the spleen, the gall bladder, the bladder, and the plentiful intestines. Each one has its own shape and its own attribute, and has a different size. He divided each of these into several parts. Each finger has three joints, and each member is composed of flesh, skin, veins, fat, and bones. He created thine eyes—not larger in size than a walnut—in seven layers, each layer possessing a special quality. If one of them fails, the world becomes dark for thee. If we were to expound on the marvels of the eye alone, many pages would be blackened (with ink).

Then, look at thine own skeleton and how He created a hard and firm solid from a delicate and thin liquid. Every part of it has its own shape and size; some (bones) are round, some are long, some are broad, some are hollow, and some are solid, each one is mounted on the other. In the size, shape, and appearance of each, there is a wisdom; rather, there are many wisdoms. Then, He made the bones the pillars of the body and He built everything upon them. If (the skeleton) were one piece, thou wouldst not be able to bend thy spine. If it were scattered loosely about, thou wouldst not be able to hold thy spine straight or stand upon thy feet. Therefore, He created it in segments so that it could bend. Then He put it together and wound sinews and veins on it and made it strong. Then, He made it like a single unit to stand erect when needed.

On each vertebra (of the spine), He brought out four projections like swellings and in the vertebra beneath it four depressions like hollows so that those projections would be seated in the hollows and stand firm. From the sides of the vertebrae, He brought out projections so that the sinews could be wound about them, to strengthen them, so that one rests upon another. He made thy whole skull of fifty-five pieces of bone and bound them together with fine seams so that if one part is damaged, the others will be sound and all will not be broken. He created teeth, some with broad crowns to grind food, and others with thin and sharp crowns to cut and break up food and (then) pass (the pieces) to the molars.¹⁶⁶¹ Then, He created seven vertebrae for the neck with veins and sinews tightly wound about them and mounted the head upon them. He created

¹⁶⁵⁹ "simple" (*yak-sifat*): simple in the scientific sense, that is, unalloyed, uncompounded, singular.

¹⁶⁶⁰ "five branches" (*panj shākh*): the five digits at the end of each limb: fingers and toes.

¹⁶⁶¹ "molars": Al-Ghazzali uses the word "mill" (*āsyā*) as in millstones. The English word "molar" derives from the Latin *molaris*, which also means "mill."

the spine of twenty-four vertebrae and placed the neck on it. He inserted the broad ribs in these vertebrae, and the same for the other bones, the description of which would be lengthy. In sum, He created two hundred and forty-eight bones in thy body, each one with a special purpose so that thine affair would be correct and prepared. He created all of this out of that despicable fluid. If one of those bones were missing, thou wouldst be rendered helpless; if there were one more of them, thou wouldst (also) be helpless.

Then, since thou hast a need to move these bones and members, in all of thy body members He created five hundred and twenty-seven muscles, each one of a unique shape. Some are shaped like fish, with thick middles and narrow ends; some are small and some are large. Each one is made up of flesh and sinews with a veil that is like its sheathe. Twenty-four muscles are employed so that thou mayst roll and move thine eyes and eyelids in every direction. Make the analogy with others, for the explanation would also be lengthy.

Then, He created three cavities in thy body and He opened channels from them to all parts of the body. One is the brain from which the nerve channels come out and reach the entire body so that the faculties of sense and movement flow throughout it. From it, He placed a main channel¹⁶⁶² running through the vertebrae so that the nerves become distant from the brain and then dry up. Another is the cavity of the liver from which He opened the veins to the seven body members to bring nourishment to them. The third is the cavity of the heart, and he opened veins from it to the entire body so that the spirit may move through it and from the heart reach to the seven body members.

Then, meditate upon each of thine own members; how He created each member and to what purpose He created it. He created the eye in seven layers in a shape and color that cannot be better. He created eyelids to wipe all around it and to clean it. He created the eyelashes straight and black to better (them) so that the pupil of the eye would gain strength with them, and so that when dust appears in the air the lashes come together lest the dust reach (the eyes), while thou canst look out from between them. The eyelashes protect (the eyes) from particles that fall from above and they are like a fence for the eyes. More wonderful than all this is that though the pupil is no larger than a lentil, the form of the heavens and the earth in all their expanse appear in it so that if thou openest thine eyes for a moment, thou seest the sky in it. If the marvels of the sight of the eye and the sight of a mirror and that which appears in it falsely were to be discussed, it could not be related in many volumes.

Then, He created the ear and placed a bitter fluid in it so that no creature would enter it. He created the external shell of the ear so as to

¹⁶⁶² That is, the spinal chord.

collect sound and deliver it to the hole of the ear. And in that, He created a multitude of twists and turns so that if thou art asleep and an ant or some creature makes to enter it, the way will be long and it will move about much and emerge a lot so as to make thee aware of it. If we explain the nose, mouth, and other members, it would be lengthy.

The point of this is that so that thou learn the method (of meditating upon the marvels of God's creation) and that thou think about each one and what it is for, so that thou become aware of the wisdom, greatness, kindness, mercy, knowledge, and power of the Creator. For, from thy head to thy toes, all are marvels; and the internal wonders and the storehouses of the brain and powers of the senses which have been placed in them are more wonderful than all else. Indeed, it is the same for the breast and the stomach, for He created the stomach like a pot that is always on the boil so that food may be cooked in it. The liver converts that food to blood and the blood vessels deliver that blood to the seven parts of the body. The gall bladder removes the foam of the blood that is like yellow bile and the spleen removes the dregs of that blood that is the black bile in it, and the kidneys remove the water from it and send (the water) to the bladder. The marvels of the womb and the generative organs are the same; and the intellectual marvels and powers that He created in him, such as sight, hearing, intellect, knowledge, and many more like those.

So, *O glory be to God*, if a person paints a fine picture on a wall, thou remainest struck by his craftsmanship and thou praisest it abundantly; yet, thou seest that all of these designs on one's exterior and interior appear from a single drop of liquid, but thou seest neither the brush nor the artist. Thou art not astonished by the greatness of this Artist, nor art thou stunned by the perfection of the power of His knowledge! Then, thou art not amazed by the perfection of His compassion and mercy! For, when there was a need for nourishment in the womb, if thou had opened thy mouth an inordinate amount of menstrual blood would have flooded thy stomach and thou would have been destroyed. He arranged that thy nourishment pass through the navel. When thou camest out of the womb, the navel was closed off and the mouth opened so that (thy) mother would be able to nourish thee in the proper amount.

Then, since thy body was weak and delicate at that time and could not endure (solid) food, He made that mother's milk, which is delicate, thy nourishment. He created the mother's bosom and He created the breasts on the bosom, and He created the tips according to the size of thy mouth and He created tiny openings in (the nipples) so that the milk would not flow too strongly for thee. He placed a bleacher within the chest to whiten the red blood that reaches it and give it to thee pure and fine. He charged thy mother with compassion so that if thou becomest

hungry any time, she becomes restless and uncomfortable. Then, since milk does not need teeth, He did not create teeth at the beginning of (thy) creation lest thou injure (thy) mother's bosom; until the time that the strength to eat (solid) food appears. Then, He creates teeth in thy mouth at the proper time, so that thou wouldst be able to contend with solid food.

There thou art! Blind of heart and blind of vision is a person who sees all these and is not astounded at the greatness of their Creator and is not amazed at His perfection and compassion, and who does not become a lover of such beauty and majesty! There thou art! Heedless and bestial is the person who does not meditate about these and does not think about himself and who wastes that intellect—the most valuable of things that he has been given—and knows no more than that when he becomes hungry, he eats bread, and when he is angry, he assaults someone. Like the beasts, he remains deprived of the contemplation of the garden of the spiritual knowledge of God Most High.

Let (the above) amount suffice as a caution, and it is not one one hundred thousandth of the wonders in thee! Most of them are in all animals, from the mosquito to the elephant, but the exposition of that would be lengthy.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE EARTH AND ALL THAT HE HAS CREATED UPON IT. If thou desirest to go beyond the wonders of thyself, look and observe the earth and how He has made it thy carpet and spread out its flanks broadly so that it would be steady and not move beneath thy feet. He has made good pure water to flow from under hard stones so that it travels over the face of the earth and it comes out gradually. If it were not held back by hard stone, it would flow out all at once and drown the world, or before a meadow could absorb it, it would be gone. Meditate upon the time of spring, when the face of the earth is all coarse dirt. When rain falls upon it, how it comes to life and becomes a brocade of seven colors;¹⁶⁶³ nay, a thousand colors, each one more beautiful than the other! Meditate upon the plants that appear and the flowers and the blossoms, each one with a different color and a different shape, each one more beautiful than the other!

Then meditate upon the trees and their fruit: the beauty and form of each one, the taste and deliciousness of each one, and the scent and

¹⁶⁶³ "seven colors" (*haft rang*): although here the term is meant to indicate many colors, the seven colors are associated with the seven planets (in the original sense of that term which came from the Greek word meaning "wanderers, so that the Sun and Moon which also noticeably move across the heavens are included). Each planet was associated with a color: Saturn (black), Jupiter (brown), Mars (red), the Sun (yellow), Venus (white), Mercury (blue), and the Moon (green).

benefit of each one. Still more, the herbs,¹⁶⁶⁴ about which thou knowest less: how He has contrived in them beneficial marvels! One is bitter, another is sweet, another is sour; one cures sickness, another makes the healthy sick; one preserves life and another is poison that takes life; one excites the choler and another drives the choler out; one brings melancholy out of the extremes of the veins and another excites melancholy; one is hot and another is cold; one is dry and another is soft; one brings sleep and another causes sleeplessness; one brings joy and another brings sorrow; and one nourishes a person, another nourishes animals, while still another nourishes fowl! Meditate upon how many thousands of these there are and in each of them there are thousands of wonders in order to see the perfection of a Power by which all intellects should be stupefied; and this too is limitless.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE VALUABLE AND RARE DEPOSITS that He has hidden beneath mountains which are called minerals: those that are suitable for adornment such as gold, silver, rubies, turquoise, the fine rubies of Badakhshan, jet, jasper, crystal, lapis lazuli, and agate; those from which utensils are made such as iron, copper, bronze, tin, and lead; and those from other deposits which are suitable for other tasks, such as salt, sulfur, oil, and tar. The least of these is salt, which makes foods tastier. If salt is not available in a town, all of the food is spoiled and the taste leaves the food. All become ill and there is a danger of death. So, look upon His kindness and mercy. Even though He has provided thee with nourishment, yet since there is something necessary for the pleasure in it, He created salt from pure rainwater which comes and collects on the earth and becomes salt.¹⁶⁶⁵ This type is also without limit.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE LIVING CREATURES upon the face of the earth; some walk, some fly, others crawl. Some walk on two legs and others on four legs, and some have a multitude of legs. Then, observe the kinds of the fowl of the air and insects of the earth: each one has a unique shape and a unique form, each one better than the other. He has given to each one what it needs to function. He has inspired each one as to how to obtain its own nourishment and to how to tend and preserve its own offspring, and how to construct its abode.

Observe the ant, how it collects its food at the proper time. It knows that all wheat will spoil if left whole. It splits (the grains) so that weevils do not fall upon them. (It knows) that if coriander seed is not whole, it will spoil. It stores that whole.

¹⁶⁶⁴ "herbs" (*gīyah*): or, plants and grasses, as contrasted with trees and shrubs.

¹⁶⁶⁵ This is the salt that leaches out of the earth from rain and creates a crust easily gathered after the salt has dried. It is still a source of salt in parts of the Middle East and Africa.

Observe the spider, how it constructs its home and how it observes (the rules of) geometry. It manufactures thread from its own spittle and seeks a corner of two walls. It drops the construction from one side and carries it to the other to fix the warp well. Then, it begins to weave the woof and arranges the distance between the threads so that some are farther apart and others closer together, so that it is good and in proportion. Then, it suspends itself by one thread from the corner of the wall waiting until a fly, which is its nourishment, flies (into the net). Then, it throws itself upon it and captures it and wraps its limbs up in that filament so that it will not be able to escape. Then, it leaves it and goes in search of another.

Observe the bee that constructs its home all in hexagons, for if it had made them four-sided—and its (own) shape is round—the corners would have been left empty and wasted. In all shapes, there is none closer to the circle and more compact than the hexagon—this has been proved by geometry—and the Lord of the Universe in His kindness and mercy has shown so much care as to instill this into that small animal.

And He inspired the mosquito to know that its nourishment is blood and He created for it a sharp, thin, hollow proboscis¹⁶⁶⁶ so as to insert it into thee and draw out blood. He also gave it sensitivity so that when thou movest thy hand to catch it, it knows and flees. And He created two wings so that it could fly and be able to flee quickly and return quickly. If it had intellect and a tongue, it would have given thanks to its Creator for such favor and care so that all mankind would have been dumbstruck by that. However, from its head to its feet, it expresses its gratitude and its glorification, *but ye understand not their praise*. (Q. 17:44)¹⁶⁶⁷

These kinds of wonders, too, have no limit. Who has the audacity to hope to come to know one of one hundred billion¹⁶⁶⁸ and say: "What dost thou say? Did these animals with their strange shapes and forms, beautiful colors, and well-made bodies create themselves, or didst thou create them?" Glory be to that God who can turn that sight back to blindness so that they do not see and make their souls heedless so that they do not think! They see with the eyes of the head, but they take no lesson with the eye of the soul. Their ears are insulated from hearing what they should, so that like beasts they hear nothing but sound. They do not enter into the language of the birds that has no letters. Their eyes are insulated from seeing what they should so that they do not see any

¹⁶⁶⁶ "proboscis" (*khurtūm*): This is the same word that is used for the elephant's trunk.

¹⁶⁶⁷ The complete verse expounds this theme beautifully: *The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving.* (Q. 17:44)

¹⁶⁶⁸ one-hundred billion: Al-Ghazzali writes this figure as "one hundred thousand thousand thousand." In Britain, it would be one hundred thousand million.

black line on white. They do not perceive those divine lines, which have neither letters nor characters, written on the outside and inside of all the particles of the universe.

Observe the ant's nest which is nothing more than a few particles and listen to what it says. It cries out with an eloquent tongue: "O simple-hearted one! If a person makes a picture on a wall, thou art astonished by the art and its mastery. Come and look to see a painting and the Painter, for I am nothing more than a particle from which the Artist, from the beginning of creation, would make of me an ant. Look at my parts, how He divides them to make for me a head, feet, heart, legs, and body parts. He constructs so many chambers and cupboards in my head and brain and in one, He places the faculty of taste, in another, He places the faculty of smell and smelling, in another, He places the sense of hearing. On the exterior of my head, He embeds eyes and forms on them the blackness of the eyes and the pupil of the eye. He forms the mouth that is the passage of food. He brings out of me feet and legs.¹⁶⁶⁹ He makes a space for the food to go so that it may be digested and a place for it to come out again. All the means for that have been created. Then, He makes a nimble shape for me in a body with three parts, and He binds them together.

He bound a sash of service like that of a chamberlain about my waist and put a black tunic (on me) and brought me into this world—all of which thou supposest He has created just for thee—so that I may go about in His favor just as thou doest. Indeed, He made thee subservient to me. Thou plantest night and day and sowest seeds and givest them water and preparest the soil in order to obtain barley, wheat, grain, seed, and kernels. Wherever thou hidest (the produce), He teaches me the way so that in my home beneath the earth I smell it and go straight to it. And thou, with all of thy labor, may not have enough for year, while I take the food for a year, and more, and store it securely. Then, I take my food to the desert and dry it in the sun. Before rain comes, the Creator inspires me that rain will come so that I may take it up and bring it back. And thou, if thou hast put a load (of grain) in the desert while flood and rain are on the way, thou hast no knowledge of that, so all will be lost and carried off by the water. Therefore, how could I not give thanks to the God Who creates me from a particle in this beauty and nimbleness and when He has established thee in thy hugeness before me to plant my food and to reap it and to work hard while I take it and eat it?"

There is no animal, small or great, that does not praise its Creator thus in the language of signs. Indeed, there is no plant that is not like that, crying this out. Indeed, there is no atom of the atoms of the

¹⁶⁶⁹ "feet and legs": The text has "hands and legs," which is a set phrase used for such members on animals even when they are not so differentiated.

universe, even though it is solid, that does not proclaim it. But mankind ignores listening to their proclamation. *Verily they are far removed from hearing.* (Q. 26:212) *There is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise.* (Q. 17:44) This, too, is a world of unlimited wonders; how would the exposition of (all) be possible?

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE SEAS that are on the surface of the earth, each one of which is a part of the ocean which surrounds the land, and all the land is nothing more than islands in the middle of the sea.¹⁶⁷⁰ In the Traditions, it is related that the land in the sea is in the amount of a stable on the land. So, when thou hast finished examining the wonders of the land, proceed to the wonders of the sea; for, as much as the sea is greater than the land, so its wonders are more numerous. All land animals have an equivalent in the sea, and there are many creatures in the sea that have no equivalent on land. Each one of them is of a different shape and nature. One is so small that the eye cannot perceive it. Another is so huge that if a person were to alight on its back, he would think that it is a mountain. Then, when he builds a fire on its back, it may become aware of that and set into motion. They realize that they have landed on the back of a living creature! Concerning the wonders of the seas, many books have been written. How is one able to describe them here?

Look beyond the animals. At the bottom of the sea, He has created an animal that is called shellfish. The shell is its skin and He has inspired it so that when it rains on the sea, it comes to the shore and opens its shell so that drops of rain—which are sweet, not like the water of the sea, which is salty—may fall inside. Then it closes its shell and descends to the sea bottom while it keeps these drops of rain inside it, like semen in a womb. It nurtures the drops inside itself. God Most High has created the essence of shell in the nature of a pearl. He spreads that power to it for a long time, until the drop of rain becomes a pearl, some small and others large, so that thou mayest make of them an adornment and decoration. And in the sea, a red plant of stone grows having the form of a plant but the essence of stone. It is called coral. From its foam, a substance falls upon the shore that is called ambergris. The marvels of these substances, other than animals, are also many.¹⁶⁷¹

¹⁶⁷⁰ Though this concept of the universal ocean presupposed a flat world, nonetheless Al-Ghazzali's description is still valid, for 70% of the earth's surface is water and the continents are much like vast islands in the midst of these waters. A globe shows this truth more clearly than the flat world maps of an atlas.

¹⁶⁷¹ It does not appear that Ghazzali had any close contact with the sea. He may have crossed the Red Sea or a corner of the Mediterranean, but more likely, he traveled by land. Consequently, his examples from the sea are rather more fabulous than those he has cited with respect to the land. The largest creature in the sea is, of course, the whale, but it is not likely he ever saw one. The story about building a fire on the back of some sea creature is a sailor's yarn, perhaps based upon building a fire on the back of a beached

More marvelous is the navigation of ships upon the sea, the construction of their shapes so that they do not sink in the water, the skilled guidance of the pilots to distinguish a favorable from a contrary wind, the creation of the stars to be his guide where the whole world is water and there are no markers. Moreover, the creation of water in a delicate and bright form and the linkage of its parts, one to another, and in the forming of the life of all things of plants and animals in it, is more marvelous than all else. For, if thou art in need of a single drink of water and do not obtain it, thou wouldst give the world, the wealth of the world that thou possessest, all the wealth on the face of earth in order that it be given thee. But, if that drink of water stayed in thy belly and the way was closed so that it could not come out, thou wouldst expend all that thou hast to be free of it. All in all, the wonders of water and the sea are also limitless.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE AIR AND THAT WHICH IS IN IT, for the air too is a sea and has surging waves. The wind is its surging waves. (It is) a substance so subtle that the eye cannot perceive it. It does not veil the sight of the eye and it is the continuous nourishment of thy life. There is a need for food and drink once or twice a day, but if thou dost not draw breath for a moment and the nourishment of the air does not reach inside thee, thou are destroyed while thou are heedless of it!

One of the characteristics of air is that vessels are suspended from it so that they do not sink in the water. The exposition of the manner of this is considerable and lengthy. Observe what He has created of clouds and rain and snow and thunder and lightning in the air before it reaches the sky. Observe those thick clouds that suddenly appear in the midst of the air. Perhaps they rise from the sea and take up water; perhaps they come into existence in the manner of vapor from the mountains; perhaps they appear from the air itself. Rain falls upon places that are far distance from mountains, the sea, and springs, drop by drop, each drop coming in a straight line, destined to fall in a specific place so that such-and-such a thirsty worm will become sated with water, and such-and-such a plant that would dry up will become moist, and to give water to such-and-such a seed that is need of water. It must go to the root of a withering tree on which is such-and-such a fruit and enter it. By way of its veins, each of which is finer than a hair in thinness, it flows to reach that fruit so that it will be moist and fresh in order that thou may eat it negligently, unaware of His kindness and mercy.

whale which suddenly revives. Ambergris does not come not from coral, but comes from the sperm whale. The story of the oyster receiving drops of fresh water leading to the creation of the pearl is also fanciful, as pearls result from the irritation of sand and other particles inside the animal. The point, however, is that people believed in these marvels, yet nonetheless ignored the lesson to be derived from them.

Upon each (drop) is written where it shall descend and to whose sustenance it belongs. If the entire world were called to make known the number of their drops, they would not be able to do so. Then, if the rain comes and goes all at once, the plants do not grow gradually. He makes the cold overcome (the rain) on its way so that it is turned into snow and it comes down like carded cotton. He has made the mountains the storehouse (of the snow) in order to collect it there to remain cold and not melt quickly. Then, when the heat of spring appears in the air, it melts gradually and the channels flow with (water) according to need, so that throughout the summer that water will be used gradually on the fields. If it were not thus, rain would have to come all the time and cause a great deal of misery. If it came all at once and then passed, plants would remain thirsty all year. In the snow, there is such delicacy and mercy! And in everything, it is thus. Indeed, all the parts of the earth and the heavens, all have been created in truth, justice, and wisdom. For this He said: *And We created not the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in play; We created them not save with truth; but most of them know not.* (Q. 44:38-39) We created them not in sport: We created them in truth; that is, We created that which was right.

ANOTHER SIGN IS THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS, the stars, and their wonders. The earth and all that is upon it are trivial in comparison with that. All the Quran is a caution to meditate upon the wonders of the sky and the stars, as He said: *And We made the sky a roof withheld; yet, they turn away from its portents.* (Q. 21:32) And He said: *Assuredly, the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of mankind.* (Q. 40:57) Thus, He has commanded thee to reflect upon the wonders of the heavens and the earth, not so that thou see the deep blue of the sky or the white of the stars, or that thou raise thine eyes. Beasts themselves also see that. But thou, who dost not recognize thy self and the wonders of thyself that are nearer to thee and are not one particle of the marvels of the sky, how wouldst thou come to know the kingdom of the heavens? Rather, thou shouldst progress slowly. First, come to know thyself, then the earth, the plants, the animals, the minerals; then the air, clouds, and their wonders, then the heavens, then the Pedestal, then the Throne. After that, thou leavest the universe of physical bodies and enter the universe of spirits. At that time, thou comest to know the angels. Satan, the *jinn*, the ranks of the angels and their various stations.

So, thou must meditate upon the heavens, the stars, their motions and orbits, and their risings and their settings. Observe what they are and why they are. Observe the multitude of celestial bodies, (so many) that no one knows their number, each with a different color. Some are red, some are white, some are like mercury, some are small, and some are

large. Then, each of their groupings collected in different shapes,¹⁶⁷² some in the form of a ram, some in the form of a bull, some in the form of a scorpion, and so forth. Indeed, for every form that there is on earth, there is a representation of their shapes in the stars there for thee. Then, (observe) their various routes and movements: some traverse the whole firmament in a month, some in a year, some in twelve years, and some in thirty. Most of them will traverse the firmament in 360,000 years—if the firmament remains and the Resurrection has not come. There is no limit to the wonders of their sciences.

When thou hast come to know some of the marvels of the earth, that their differences are appropriate to their different shapes, for the earth is so expansive that no one can comprehend all of it. The sun is about 160 times the size of the earth.¹⁶⁷³ With this, thou knowest that the distance of the stars is vast, for which reason they appear so small.¹⁶⁷⁴ With this, thou know that how fast they move, for in the space of half an hour the disc of the sun rises above the earth. It traverses a distance about 160 times that of the earth in that period.¹⁶⁷⁵

It was about this that the Messenger (S) one day asked Gabriel if the End¹⁶⁷⁶ had been determined. He answered: "*Lā, na'am*. No, yes."¹⁶⁷⁷ (The Messenger) said: "How is that?" He answered: "From the moment when I uttered 'no' to now when I uttered 'yes' it has traveled five hundred years."

And, there are stars in the sky a hundred times the size of the earth that appear very minute because of their great altitude. If a star is like this, compare by analogy how much greater is the entire firmament! All of these with their vastness appear tiny in thine eye so that thou may recognize the greatness and sovereignty of the Creator. Then, in each star

¹⁶⁷² "shapes": Al-Ghazzali is here referring to the constellations. He then mentions Aries the Ram, Taurus the Bull, and Scorpio the Scorpion.

¹⁶⁷³ The diameter of the earth is about 7,900 miles, while that of the sun is 865,000 miles; in this measurement, the sun is about 110 times the size of the earth, rather smaller than Al-Ghazzali's more generous estimate.

¹⁶⁷⁴ Is Ghazzali suggesting that the sun and the stars are of the same nature?

¹⁶⁷⁵ Al-Ghazzali is describing the length of time it takes the disc of the sun to (apparently) clear the horizon. By his calculation, it travels 160 times the size of the earth in the half-hour or so it takes to do this. Of course, the effect of the sunrise is created by the earth's rotation rather than by the sun's moving in relation to the earth. The speed of the earth's rotation relative to its orbit around the sun depends upon one's latitude. At the equator the surface of the earth is turning at about 1,000 mph, while at the latitude of New York, for example, it is turning at something in excess of 500 mph.

¹⁶⁷⁶ "the End" (*zawāl*): the End of things. *And warn mankind of a day when the doom will come upon them, and those who did wrong shall say: Our Lord! Reprieve us for a little while. We will obey thy call and will follow the messengers. (It will be answered): Did ye not swear before that there would be no End for you? (Q. 14:44)*

¹⁶⁷⁷ "*Lā, na'am*. No, yes.": Ghazzali first gives the Arabic, followed by the Persian *nah, āri*. Both mean, of course: "No, yes."

there is a mystery: in its color, in its going and coming and stopping. Its rising and its setting are a mystery. That which is clearer, is the mystery of the sun, for the firmament has given it an inclination from the greatest heaven, so that part of the year, it is at the zenith and part farther away in order that the weather become variable. Sometimes it is cold, sometimes hot, and sometimes temperate. For this reason, there is a difference in night and day: sometimes (they) are longer and sometimes shorter.¹⁶⁷⁸ If we explain the manner of this, it would become lengthy.

Were we to expound upon that which God Most High has provided us of these sciences in this short life, it would take much time. All that we know is trivial and little, beside all that has been made known to the scholars and the saints. The knowledge of the all the scholars and saints is little beside the knowledge of the prophets concerning the details of the creation. The knowledge of the prophets is little beside the knowledge of the proximate angels. If thou join together all of this knowledge, in (comparison with) the knowledge of God Most High, it itself would not merit thy calling it knowledge. Glory be to that God Who has given to mankind so much knowledge! Then, He placed the stigma of ignorance upon all and said: *And of knowledge, ye have been vouchsafed but little.* (Q. 17:85)

This much is an illustration of the streams of thought. It has been cited so that thou know thine own heedlessness, for if thou goest to the abode of a prince that is painted and plastered, thou wouldst describe it for a long time and thou art amazed; while thou always see all these wonders in the House of God Most High and thou art not amazed! This physical universe is the House of God Most High. Its carpet is the earth, its roof the sky, but it is a roof without pillars, and that is more marvelous. Its treasury is the mountains and its storehouse is the seas. Its household goods and utensils are the animals and the plants. Its lamp is the moon and its torch is the sun. Its candles are the stars, and its torchbearers are the angels; yet, thou art heedless of the marvels of this House. The House is very immense and thine eye is minuscule and cannot contain it. Thou art as the ant that has a hole in the corner of the castle of a king and is unaware of anything save its own nest, its nourishment, and its comrades. It has no knowledge of the beauty of the architecture of the palace, the multitudes of slaves, the king's throne, and his kingship. If thou desirest to be satisfied with the degree of an ant, do so! But if not, thou hast been given entrance to wander admiringly in the garden of the spiritual knowledge of God Most High. Come out and open thine eyes so as to see its wonders and become astonished and amazed! *Peace!*

¹⁶⁷⁸ The marvel of the seasons is not diminished by the fact that they are caused by the inclination of the axis of the earth rather than by the movement of the sun.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCERNING THE UNITY OF GOD AND TRUST

Know that trust is one of the stations of the proximate ones, and its degree is great, but the knowledge of that in itself is subtle and difficult, while practicing it is hard. Its difficulty is that whoever sees no effect [in affairs]¹⁶⁷⁹ for anything, other than God Most High, is deficient in his (belief in God's) Unity. If all causes are also set aside, one has found fault with the Religious Law. If one does not see a Causer for causes, one has been inimical to one's own intellect. If one sees it, it may be that one put one's trust in something else of the causes¹⁶⁸⁰ and fall into a deficiency (in one's belief in God's) Unity. Consequently, an explanation of trust, in as much as one confuses the intellect, the Law, and Unity and groups them all together, is an abstruse subject and not just anyone can comprehend it. First, we shall discuss the virtue of trust; then its true nature, and finally its states and acts.

THE VIRTUE OF TRUST

God Most High has commanded all to trust (in Him) and has made that a condition of faith, saying: *So put your trust (in God) if ye are indeed believers.* (Q. 5:23) And He said: "God Most High loves the trusting": *Lo! God loveth those who put their trust (in Him).* (Q. 3:159) And He said: "Whoever trusts in Him; He is enough": *And whosoever putteth his trust in God, He will suffice him.* (Q. 65:3) And He said: "Is not God sufficient for the servant of God?" *Is not God sufficient for His servant?* (Q. 39:36) and there are many such verses.

And the Messenger (S) said: "Peoples were shown to me; I saw my own people filling the mountains and the plains and I was astonished at their great number and I rejoiced. I was asked: 'Art thou pleased?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'Together with these are seventy thousand who will go to Paradise without being called to account.'" (The Companions) asked: "Who are they?" He said: "Those who do not base their acts upon spells, auguries, and scars. They have faith in and trust nothing other than God Most High." Then 'Ukkashah¹⁶⁸¹ stood up and said: "O Messenger of God, offer a supplication so that I may be one of them." (The Messenger) said: "O Lord God, make him of them." Another stood up and requested the same supplication. (The Messenger) said: "'Ukkashah has preceded thee in it."

¹⁶⁷⁹ From the AA text.

¹⁶⁸⁰ That is: rather than the Causer (God).

¹⁶⁸¹ 'Ukkāshah: 'Ukkāshah bin Muḥsin, a Companion of the Prophet. A superb horseman, he fought bravely at the battle of Badr.

The Messenger (S) said: "If, as is the right of trust, ye had trusted in God Most High, He would have delivered your sustenance to you as he does to the birds who every morning fly out of their nests with empty and hungry stomachs and in the evening return sated and with full stomachs." And he said: "Whoever gives his trust to God Most High, God Most High makes their sustenance sufficient and He delivers it from an unexpected place. Whoever gives his trust to the world, God Most High leaves him to the world."

When Abraham (A) was seized to be placed on the catapult and thrown into the fire,¹⁶⁸² he said: "*God suffices for me; He is a most excellent Advocate.*" When he was (thrown) into the air (by the catapult), Gabriel came to him and said: "Dost thou have any need?" (Abraham) replied: "No," because he was faithful to what he said, that God would suffice for him. And He described him with this trait, saying: *And Abraham who fulfilled (his word).* (Q. 53:37) Revelation came to David (A): "O David, there is no servant of God amongst all mankind who places his hand in Me that if all heavens and the earth arise to trick and deceive him, I would not give them an opening to him."

Sa'id bin Jubayr says: "A scorpion bit me. My mother swore over me: 'Give me thy (bitten) hand so that a spell can be spoken (over it). I gave the other hand which was sound to the worker of spells because of my mother's heart.'" This was because the Messenger (S) had said that a person is not trusting who casts spells and cauterizes.¹⁶⁸³ Ibrahim Adham says: "I asked a monk where he obtained his food. He said: 'Ask Him who gives sustenance, whence He sends it, for I have no knowledge of that.'"

Someone who was always engaged in worship was asked: "Whence dost thou get thy food?" He pointed to his teeth and said: "He Who created these millstones will send the load (to be ground by them)." Harim bin Hayyan asked Uways Qarani: "Where dost thou command me to take up my station?" He answered: "Syria." (Harim) asked: "What is the livelihood like there?" Uways said: "Their hearts are overwhelmed with doubt and they do not accept counsel."

¹⁶⁸² This story about Abraham is not found in the Bible, although it can be found in Apocryphal literature in several forms. After destroying the idols worshipped by the people, he was condemned to death by burning. God saved him from the flames miraculously. For a discussion of Abraham, see the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* or the section on Abraham printed in a separate volume: *Abraham*.

¹⁶⁸³ "cauterizes" (*dāgh kardan*): The practice of fighting sickness with the application of hot objects or brands to the body still persists in the Arabian Peninsula. Several students the translator taught from that region showed him the scars on their persons resulting from similar treatment.

THE TRUE NATURE OF THE UNITY UPON WHICH TRUST IS BUILT

Know that trust is one of the states of the soul and it is the fruit of faith. Faith has many effects, but trust is one of those based upon two faiths: one is faith in the Unity of God and the other is faith in the perfection of (His) kindness and mercy. However, an explanation of God's Unity is lengthy and its study has no limit, but we shall note that much upon which trust is based.

Thou must know that the Unity is of four degrees: It has a kernel, and that kernel has a kernel; it has a skin, and that skin has a skin. Therefore, it has two kernels and two skins. Its similitude is a fresh walnut, in which the two sections of pith and the two coatings are evident. The (walnut's) oil is the pith of the pith.¹⁶⁸⁴

THE FIRST DEGREE is that one declare *There is no god but God* with the tongue, but the soul does not have belief. This is the Unity of the hypocrite.

THE SECOND DEGREE means that one believes in imitation, like the common folk; or with some kind of a guide such as the scholastic theologian.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one sees in a witnessing vision that all proceeds from one source and that there is no more than one Agent; and that there is no agency (left) for anyone else. This is a light that appears in the soul. This vision is obtained through that light. This is not like the belief of the common folk and the scholastic theologian: that belief is a cord that falls on the soul, either by the device of imitation or the device of evidence.

This vision is an opening and it removes all ties. There is a difference between a person who is led to the belief that such-and-such a lord is at home because so-and-so says that he is at home—this is common imitation which he has heard from his mother and father—and one who deduces that the man is at home through the evidence of a horse and slave at the door of the house—this is the view of the scholastic theologian—and one who sees him by sight inside the house—this is the likeness of the unitarianism of the spiritually insightful. The degree of this Unity is great, but in it one sees the creation and the Creator and knows that the creation is from the Creator. So, in this (degree) there is

¹⁶⁸⁴ The Unity of God with its four degrees is likened to a walnut: there is the fruit (nut) itself, which, in the case of a walnut, is divided into two sections, and the oil concealed within the nut, its most essential part. The nut has an (inner) skin, and the whole is enclosed in a hard shell, the outer skin. With respect to the analogy with the Divine Unity, progressing inwards, the shell is the declaration (*tashahhud*), the inner skin is the imitation (*taqlid*), the meat of the nut is witnessing (*mushāhadah*), and the oil is annihilation (*fanā*). See text below.

abundance and number. As long one sees two, one is in disunion and not unified.

THE FOURTH DEGREE is the perfection of God's Unity, where one sees nothing save One. One sees all itself as one, and knows it as one, and disunion does not enter into this witnessing. This is what the Sufis call "annihilation" in God's Unity. Just as when Husayn Hallaj¹⁶⁸⁵ saw Khawwas¹⁶⁸⁶ walking about in the desert, he asked: "What art thou doing?" (The man) replied: "I am establishing my feet in trust." (Hallaj) said: "Thou hast spent thy life in the internal abode; then, thou satest down. When wilt thou reach (annihilation) in Unity?"

Therefore, there are these four stations:

FIRST, the Unity of the hypocrite. That is the outer skin,¹⁶⁸⁷ like the shell of a walnut. If thou eatest it, it will be unpleasant. If thou lookest inside it, it is ugly even though its exterior is green. If thou burnest it, it makes smoke and catches fire. If thou puttest it in thy house, it is of no use and takes up thy space. It is good for nothing except that thou leavest it for a few days so that it will keep the inner skin fresh and protect it from spoiling. The Unity of a hypocrite, too, does not serve any purpose, except that the shell protects it from the sword and the shell is its frame by which it escapes the sword.

[SECOND,] when it has become like the body: life remains, but its Unity has no benefit, just as the inner skin of a walnut is suitable for burning. It should be preserved on the meat (of the walnut) so that it may rest in its place and not spoil; but in comparison with the meat, it is trivial. The Unity of the common folk and the scholastic scholar is fit for this too, in that it preserves the meat—and that is one's life—from the fire of hell. But, even though it performs this function, it is devoid of the delicacy of the walnut meat and its oil. Just as the meat of the walnut is the object and is valuable, but when thou addest the oil to it, it is not devoid of dregs and it does not achieve perfect purity in itself.

THE THIRD DEGREE of Unity is also not free of disunion, number, and excess.

Rather, THE FOURTH (KIND) is the perfect purity of Unity, for in it God remains and nothing else. One sees naught but One. One also

¹⁶⁸⁵ Husayn Hallaj: Abū al-Mughīth al-Husayn bin Mansūr al-Hallāj. Arberry calls him the supreme example of the "intoxicated" Sufi. His extraordinary pronouncement "*Anā al-ḥaqq*" ("I am Truth," or possibly "I am God.") was considered blasphemous and he was accused of atheism (*zandaqah*) for which he was executed at Baghdad AH309/922CE. 'Attar and others have defended him against these accusations. (Arberry, pp. 59-60; 'Attar, pp. 150-3; Munjid)

¹⁶⁸⁶ Khawwas: probably Ibrāhīm Khawwās, see Note 1700.

¹⁶⁸⁷ "outer skin" (*pūst-i pūst*): Literally, the skin of the skin.

forgets oneself and one becomes non-existent with respect to seeing oneself, just as everything else has become non-existent in one's sight.

EXCURSUS: [A PERSON IS COMPELLED IN HIS OWN CHOOSING]¹⁶⁸⁸

Surely, thou wilt say: "These degrees of Unity are difficult for me. An explanation is required so that I may understand how I may see all from one while I see many causes. How can I see them as one while I see the heavens, the earth, and creation? All these are not one."

Know that the Unity of the hypocrite is with the tongue, the Unity of common folk is with belief, and the Unity of the scholastic scholar is with evidence. Thou art able to understand these three. The problems lie in the Unity of the last (kind).

As for the fourth Unity, there is no need of trust for it; trust is sufficient for the third Unity. Expressing in words and also explaining this fourth Unity to a person who has not attained it is difficult. However, in short, know this much: that it is permissible for there to be many things that have a kind of connection with one another. By means of that connection they become like one thing, because in the sight of a spiritually cognizant man, that phase comes (in which) he sees one and does not see many; just as there are many things for a man: flesh, skin, heart, foot, stomach, liver, etc., but in reality a man is one thing.¹⁶⁸⁹

It may be that a person know a person as he knows one thing, not noting the details of the members of the body. If he is asked: "What didst thou see?" he says: "I did not see more than one thing. I saw a man." If they ask: "What art thou thinking about?" He answers: "I am thinking of nothing more than one thing; I am thinking of my beloved." So, his totality has become his beloved and that is one thing.

Then, know that there is a station in spiritual insight where, when a person reaches it, he really sees that all that exists is interconnected, one with another, and all are like one animate being. The relationship of the parts of the world, such as the heavens, the earth, the stars to each other, is like the relationship of the parts of one animate being to each other. The relationship of all the world to its Director—from one aspect; not from all aspects—is like the relationship of the kingdom of the body of an animal to the spirit and intellect which are its Director. Until a person recognizes this, that *Verily, God created Adam*

¹⁶⁸⁸ From the AA text.

¹⁶⁸⁹ Al-Ghazzali uses the word *mardum* for a "man" in this passage, which in modern Persian is usually used in a plural sense of "people, mankind." In classical Persian, it was more often singular, meaning "a man; a polite civilized man; civil, humane." (Steingass) HK notes that in the corresponding passage in *The Revival*, he uses the singular *ādami*, "a man, a human being."

in His image,¹⁶⁹⁰ it cannot be comprehended by his understanding. We have referred to something of this in the Prolegomena, and it is better to shorten the discussion about it; for it shakes the chain of madmen and not everyone has the capacity for understanding for this.

As for the third Unity, the Unity which is activity, we have discussed this at length in the book *The Revival*. If thou art partial to that, thou mayst look for it (there). Let the amount we have said in the chapter on Meditation¹⁶⁹¹ suffice, as thou knowest that the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the wind, the rain and all that thou think of as causes are all (in fact) subservient, like a pen in the hand of a scribe. Nothing moves on its own, for all are brought into action at the proper time and in proper amount, just as all should be. As a result, ascribing (the cause) to them is an error, just as ascribing the signature for a (royal) honor to the pen and paper (would be). However, that which is point of consideration is the free choice of animals, in which thou supposest that they have something. This is an error, for a human being is constrained and compelled and in the essence of his choosing. As we have said, his affair is fettered to power, and power is subservient to the will. Therefore, since power is subservient to the will, and the key to the will is not in his control, nothing is in his control. Thou comest to know all of this because thou knowest that an act that is imputed to a person is of three degrees:

ONE is that if, for example, thou puttest thy foot on water, it sinks. It is said that it has penetrated the water and separated it, one part from another. This is called a natural act.

ANOTHER is that it is said one has taken a breath. This is called an involuntary act.¹⁶⁹²

THE THIRD is that it is said: "he spoke and left": this is called a voluntary act.

¹⁶⁹⁰ Not from the Quran. Cf.: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image...'" (Gen. 1:26)

¹⁶⁹¹ The previous chapter.

¹⁶⁹² "an involuntary act" (*fi'l-i irādatī*): This is a curious inversion of meaning. In Modern Persian, the word *irādī* means "voluntary," among other things. (The difference between Ghazzali's *irādatī* and modern *irādī* is because, in Ghazzali's work, there is a preference for the *at* Arabic feminine ending. Over the centuries, an increasing number of these forms have shifted to the *ah* ending, which is always dropped in Arabic—but not always in Persian usage—when the *yā-i nisbah* is attached.) Ghazzali is referring to the unquenchable will to life and to survive and protect oneself from injury that results in automatic responses to situations without much thought as well as sustaining acts such as breathing. In this sense, they are involuntary. They are the involuntary acts and reactions caused by the self-interest of the volition or will.

AS FOR THE NATURAL ACT, it is obvious that it is not under one's control, for if one goes upon the water, the water will necessarily part because of one's weight. This is not under one's control. Whether one wants that or not, it will be thus. Indeed, if thou placest a stone on the surface of the water, it will sink into it. Its sinking is not the act of the stone; rather, it necessarily follows from the weight of the stone.

AS FOR THE INVOLUNTARY ACT, it is like breathing. If thou reflectest, it is the same. If one wants to withhold one's breath, one cannot. One has been so created that the will for breathing appears in one, whether one desires it or not. If a person aims to hit someone in the eye with a needle¹⁶⁹³ from afar, that person will necessarily begin to shut his eyes. If he does not want to do this, he cannot (stop himself). For, he has been created thus, so that that volition will necessarily appear in him, just as he has been created so that he will necessarily sink in water when he stands on the water. Consequently, a person's being compelled is plain from both of these two (kinds of acts).

AS FOR VOLUNTARY ACTS, such a talking and walking, the doubt in this is as to whether one wants to do it or does not want to do it. But thou must know that if one wants to, at the time one wants to, his intellect decides: "This is good for thee." Perhaps, one needs some thought about this. When it has decided that one's good lies in (doing) that, the volition necessarily appears and the bodily members begin to act, just like the (involuntary) shutting of the eye when one sees a needle (coming at him) at a distance. Since the knowledge that a needle is harmful to the eye and closing (the eye) is good, one is always prepared (to react). It is plain that there is no need for thought about that. Without reflection, one knew that it is good. From the realization of that good, that volition appeared, and from that volition, power necessarily sets to work.

Here (in the voluntary act), once one has finished pondering, it has become of that character that was there (in the involuntary act), and that same necessity appeared. If a person picks up a stick to beat someone, (the one fleeing) naturally runs away until he comes to the edge of a roof. (If) he knows that leaping down will be easier (on him) than being beaten, he jumps. If he knows that it will be worse (for him), he necessarily stays where he is and does not move. For, the movement of his feet is fettered by the will, and the will is fettered by knowing that that is preferable. It is for this reason that a person cannot kill himself even though he has hands and a knife, because the power of the hand is

¹⁶⁹³ "needle" (*sūzan*): The Persian *sūzan* refers to a needle, but Ghazzali is probably referring to a type larger than the ordinary sewing needle that comes to mind, especially as he mentions its being thrown from a distance. Perhaps a bodkin, about the size of an awl, is intended.

bound by the will, and the will is bound by what the intellect says: that this is (to one's) good and is doable.

And the intellect is also compelled, for it is like a mirror in that whatever it knows the form of that appears in it. Since killing is not good, it does not command it and that volition does not appear, except at a time of calamity when one does not have the strength to endure and one considers killing (oneself) better than (living on). Therefore, that which is called a voluntary act is bound to one's welfare, as it appears in one's judgment. If not, when the necessity for this appears, it is like the (involuntary) necessity to breathe and to shut the eyes, and the necessity for that is like the (natural) necessity of sinking in the water.

These causes are interconnected and the rings of the chain of causes are many. We have explained this in *The Revival*. As for the power which has been created in a human being, it is one of the rings of the chain of causes. From this, one supposes that one controls something, but that is pure error. For, its connection to one is nothing more than that one is its locus and a passage for it. As a result, one is the passage for the choice which has been created in one and a passage for the power which has been created in one. So, as a tree—in which power and volition have not been created—moves by cause of a breeze, one has been made their locus by necessity. That is called "pure compulsion." And as the power of God Most High is not constrained by anything external to Him, that is called "invention." Since a human being is neither like this nor like that—because his power and volition are tied to other causes over which he has no control—his act does not resemble an act of God so that it might be called "creation" and invention. And since he is the locus of power and volition that has been created in him by necessity, he is not like a tree so that his act might be called pure compulsion. Rather, it is of another kind and it requires another name: it is called "acquisition." From all of this, it is clear that even though the act of a human being is by his choice, but as he himself is compelled in his choice—whether he wants it or not—consequently, he has no control over anything.

EXCURSUS: [THERE IS NO INCONSISTENCY AMONGST THE LAW,
INTELLECT, AND THE UNITY]¹⁶⁹⁴

Surely thou wilt say: "It if is thus, why is there spiritual reward and punishment? For what is the Religious Law, if no one has any control over anything?" Know that this is the place at which it is said that God's Unity is in the Law, and the Law is in God's Unity. Many of the weak drown in the midst of this. A person who can walk upon water finds escape from this Destroyer. If he cannot, well, he can swim. Most

¹⁶⁹⁴ From the AA text.

of the people who have found safety from this are those who did not go out to sea, lest they be drowned. The common folk are among these, but they do not realize it. It is a mercy upon them that they do not cross the shore of this sea, lest they drown suddenly. Most of those who have sailed on the sea of Unity have drowned in it because they did not know how to swim. Perhaps, they also do not have the intelligence to learn, so that, having become deceived by themselves, they do not seek (to learn it) and they drown in this sea. For, nothing is under our control and He does all. That one for whom hardship has been decreed will not change that by striving. That one for whom happiness has been decreed has no need of striving. All of this ignorance and error, and it is the cause of destruction! Learning the true nature of these matters—however much it is not suitable to be written in a book—since the discussion has come this far, a short account will be given here:

Know that (the answer to the question) thou askest: "Why is there spiritual reward and punishment?" is: the punishment is not because thou hast done some evil deed and someone becomes angry at thee and takes revenge upon thee, or is delighted with thee and gives thee a robe of honor as reward. This is far from the Divine Attributes! But if a mixture of blood, or yellow bile, or something else inside thee assaults (thee) and from it something is born which is called "illness," when it is treated with medicine, another state is born which is called "good health." In the same way, when appetite and anger have overcome thee, thou hast become their prisoner. From that, a fire that is thy destruction is born that attacks the soul. For this, the Messenger (S) said: "*Anger is piece of the Fire.*" He said: "It is not anger which thou hast put in charge of thyself, but a tongue of flame." As when the light of intelligence gathers strength, the fire of passion and anger dies out, so the light of thy faith puts out the fire of hell in the same manner, so that it says: "*Pass on, O believer, the light of thy faith is putting out my fire!*" Hell continues to complain about faith and this is not just talk. Rather, (hell) itself does not have the strength to endure the light (of faith) and is routed. As a mosquito is driven away by the wind, the fire of the carnal appetite is driven away by the light of intelligence.

Therefore, nothing else will be brought for thee from some other place. It will be given to thee from thine own (deeds). *It is nothing more than your deeds being returned to you.* Therefore, the seed of the fire of hell is thine anger and carnal appetite, and they are with thee inside thee. If thou knowest the lore of certainty, thou wilt see, as He said: *Nay, would that ye knew (now) with a sure knowledge, for ye will behold hell-fire.* Q. 102:5-6)

So, know that as poison carries a person to sickness and sickness carries (one) to the cemetery, and no anger or revenge is present, sinning and carnality make the soul ill. And that illness becomes one's fire, and

that fire is of the nature of the fire of hell, not of the nature of the fire of this world, by the rule of similarity.¹⁶⁹⁵ As magnetism draws iron to itself, hell draws the one who is destined for hell to itself, and no anger is present. Know that with respect to spiritual reward, it is the same, the discussion of which would be lengthy. This is the answer to that which thou askedst about the "why" of spiritual reward and punishment.

As for that which thou askedst: "So then, what is the Religious Law and the sending of messengers?" Know that this too is a great force to carry the people by the chain of force to Paradise, as he said: "*Art thou astonished at a people who are lead to the Garden in chains? They are kept with the bow of force so as not to go to hell.*" As he said: "*Ye throng into the fire, while I am undertaking to restrain you.*" "Ye are like the moth that throws itself into the flame and I have seized your waists and shall not let you (go into the fire)."

Therefore, know that one of the links of the chain of His sway is the speech of the messengers from which understanding is born so that thou may distinguish the (right) path from the false path. From the intimidation (of the words), fear is born. This knowledge and this fear remove the dust from thy mirror and wash it away from the intellect so that this verdict is reflected in it: that taking the path of the Hereafter is better than that of the world. And from that reflection, the volition to take the path is born. From that volition, the limbs are set in motion because they are subject to it, whether they want to be or not. With that chain, thou art forcibly restrained from hell and carried to Paradise. The similitude of the prophets is the shepherd who has a flock of sheep. On his right, there is a green meadow, and on his left a cave, in which there are many wolves. The shepherd stands beside the cave and shakes his staff so that the sheep, compelled by the fear of the staff, jump back away from the cave and go in the direction of the meadow. This is the meaning of the sending of the messengers.

As for that which thou askest: "If one has been condemned to hardship, what is the benefit of striving?" the words are correct, and from another aspect, void. These words are correct in that they are cause of thy perdition, for the sign that a person has been condemned to hardship is that these words fall upon his soul and he makes no effort, neither sowing nor reaping. The sign that a person has been condemned to death is that when he becomes hungry, the thought occurs in his heart not to eat. He says: "What good is bread to me?" He does not extend his hand to eat and he does not eat until, by necessity, he dies. If he has been condemned to poverty, he says: "Of what use is sowing seed?" so he neither sows nor reaps. And he for whom happiness has been decreed, he

¹⁶⁹⁵ "by the rule of similarity" (*muġānasat*): AA has "by the rule of familiarity" (*mu²ānasat*).

has been made aware that wealth and life have been decreed for him. They have been decreed because he has cultivation, business, and consumption. Therefore, this decree is not in vain; rather, it is for (certain) reasons.

Whoever has been created for some work, his means for that are also prepared. It is not that he is delivered to that task without reason. For this, said the Messenger (S): "*Act, for all is made ready for him who is created for it.*" Read the good news about thine outcome from thine acts and states which are imposed upon thee by necessity. When striving and repetition have overcome thee, know that this is good news that shows that the happiness of leadership has been decreed for thee if thou conclude it well. If sloth and idleness had been made to master thee, this would have dropped uselessly into thy soul. Indeed, thou wouldst say: "If I have been condemned to eternity in ignorance, of what use is the repetition of taking pains?" From this, read the mandate of thine ignorance and know that its sign is that thou shalt never attain the degree of leadership. In summary, compare the Hereafter with this world: *Your creation and your raising (from the dead) are only as (that) of a single soul; (Q. 31:28) the same in their life and their death? (Q. 45:21)*¹⁶⁹⁶

When thou hast come to understand these truths, these three difficulties depart and Unity becomes established. It becomes clear that there is no contradiction amongst the Law, the intellect, and God's Unity for a person whose eye of perception is opened. We shall not prolong this subject, for this book cannot support such words.

DISCLOSING THE OTHER BELIEF UPON WHICH TRUST IS BUILT

Know that we have said that trust is based upon two beliefs: one is the Unity of God, which we have explained; the other is that thou know that the Creator is He and all is His. With all of that, He is Compassionate, Wise, and Kind. His care and mercy with respect to every ant and gnat, not to speak of a human being, is greater than that of a mother for her child, as it has been related in the Traditions. And thou knowest that the universe and all there is in the universe has been created in a manner of perfection, beauty, grace, and wisdom, so that nothing can possibly excel them. And thou knowest that He withheld nothing of His mercy and kindness. Everything that He created, He has created as it must be. If all the intellects of the world were to get together and give free rein to the perfection of their intelligence and cleverness, and consider whether there is a hair-point or a mosquito's wing that is not as

¹⁶⁹⁶ The full text of Q. 45:21 is: *Or do those who commit ill-deeds suppose that We shall make them as those who believe and do good works, the same in their life and their death? (Q. 45:21)*

it should be, either too small or too large, they will not discover it and they will know that all is as it must be.

As for anything that is ugly, its perfection is that it be ugly. If it were not ugly, it would be deficient and an underlying reason would be lost. For, if He had not created ugliness, for example, a person would not himself know the value of beauty and would not find comfort in that. If it were not deficient, the perfection itself would be deficient and there would be no pleasure for the perfect from its own perfection, because perfection and deficiency can (only) be known relatively. Just as if there were no father, there would be no son, and if there were no son, there would be no father. Such things are in contrast with each other, and a contrast is between two things. When the duality departs and becomes one, that which is the basis of the contrast departs.

Know that it is permissible that the underlying reasons of affairs be hidden from mankind, but there must be faith in (the proposition) that thy welfare lies in that which He has decreed, and that (things) must be as they are. Therefore, there is an underlying reason for the sickness and disability, the sin and unbelief, the destruction and loss, and the pain and sorrow that exist in the world, and it must be as it is. The welfare of him whom He created poor is in poverty, for if he were rich he would have been ruined. It is the same for him whom He created rich. This too is a vast sea, like the sea of God's Unity, and many persons have been drowned in this sea. It is tied to the mystery of destiny that it is not permitted to disclose. If we were to wade into this sea, the discussion would be long; but this is the best part of faith, and trust, too, has need of this.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF TRUST

Know that trust is one of the states of the soul and it is the fruit of the faith in God's Unity and in the perfection of favor. The essence of this state is the confidence of the soul in the Advocate, keeping it strong and taking rest in it so that the soul does not tie itself to livelihood and does become disheartened because of shortcomings in external things. Instead, one has confidence in God, that He will deliver sustenance to him. It is like the spurious claim that is made upon a person fraudulently. He calls an advocate in order to ward off that fraud. If he has faith in the advocate in four qualities, his heart has confidence in the advocate and he is secure:

ONE is that (the advocate) is knowledgeable, with a complete knowledge of the kinds of fraud.

ANOTHER is that he has the complete power to express what he knows with two things: one is with the strength of the soul to be courageous, and the other is with eloquence. For there is the person who

knows, but cannot articulate, either from fear or because of some speech impediment.

THIRD is that he is completely sympathetic to the client, and eager to preserve the truth.

When he has faith in all three¹⁶⁹⁷ of these, he is secure in his soul and he has confidence in him. He abandons stratagem and management on his own behalf. In the same way, whoever has comprehended and believed in the meaning of this: *How excellent a Lord and how excellent an Advocate!*—that all of whatever exists, exists through God Most High and there is no other Agent, and that in all of this, there is no deficiency in His knowledge and power, and that His mercy and care is such that there cannot be anything beyond that—he is confident of the grace of God Most High and puts aside stratagem and management. He knows that his daily sustenance is predestined and will reach him in its own time and that his affairs have been arranged in a manner worthy of His grace, generosity, greatness, and Lordship. It may be that he is certain of these attributes, but there be some cowardice in his nature that is fearful; for one's nature does not always obey everything that a person knows with certainty. Instead, it may be that it retains its devotion to something which he knows with certainty to be an error, just as when one is eating a sweetmeat and someone likens it to filth, it becomes so that one cannot eat it, even though one knows (that person's words) were a lie. If one wants to sleep alone in a house with a dead body, one cannot, even though one certainly knows that the corpse is still and cannot rise.

So, trust must have both the strength of certainty and the strength of the soul so that anxiety may depart from the soul. So long as one has not obtained that complete tranquillity and confidence, there is no trust. For, the meaning of trust is the soul's confidence in God in affairs. Abraham (A) had total faith and certainty when he said: *Show me how Thou givest life to the dead. He said: Dost Thou not believe? He said: Yea, but (I ask) in order that my heart may be at ease.* (Q. 2:260) He said: "I am certain, but so as to put my heart at ease," for the peace of heart is a follower of the imagination and the senses at the beginning of a state; then, when it reaches the limit, the soul too becomes subservient to certainty and it no longer requires external witnessing.

¹⁶⁹⁷ The attentive reader will have noted an inconsistency here. Before enumerating the required qualities, Ghazzali declares them to be four, but he only gives three. By a comparison with *The Revival*, it becomes clear that the point called "third" should actually be "fourth." The four qualities (in *The Revival*) are: guidance (*hidāyah*), strength (*qūwah*), eloquence (*faṣāhah*), and compassion (*shafaqah*).

THE DEGREES OF TRUST

Know that there are three degrees of trust:

THE FIRST DEGREE is that one's state be like that of the man in a dispute who takes an advocate: prompt, eloquent, guiding, courageous, and sympathetic, with whom he is secure.

THE SECOND DEGREE is that one's state be like that of an infant who, in all that happens to him, knows nothing except his mother. When he is hungry, he calls her. If he is afraid, he clings to her. That is his nature and he does that neither because he is forced, nor through free choice. This is a client who is unaware of his own trust because of his being engrossed in the advocate. However, the first is aware of his trust. Either through constraint or free choice, he has betaken himself to trust.

THE THIRD DEGREE is that one's state be that of a corpse before a washer of corpses. One sees oneself as a corpse, moving by Eternal Power, not by the self, just as a corpse moves by the movements of the washer. If something happens to one, one does not supplicate either, not as a child calls its mother. Rather, one is a child who knows that even if he does not call his mother, she knows his condition and will take care of it for him.

So, in the last station there is no free choice. In the second station, there is no free choice except imploring, supplication, and recourse to the Advocate. In the first station, there is free choice, but in the contrivance of means that have been made known by the practice and custom of the Advocate. For example, if one knows that the custom of the Advocate is that he will not argue until one is present and the record is present, one must act according to this practice. Then, all becomes waiting for what the Advocate will do. All that happens, he sees as from the Advocate. He sees the presentation of the record by Him, too, which has been prepared at His direction.

Therefore, a person whose trust is at this station does not refrain from business and agriculture and the external things that have been made known of the practice of God Most High, but as he is also trusting, he does not place confidence in his business and agriculture. Rather, (he puts it) in the grace of God Most High to deliver this business and agriculture to its desired end. As He has given over the activities and means of business to him, and as He gives the guidance of that to him, he does these things and sees whatever he sees as though it were from God, as it has been explained.

(The declaration that) *There is no might and no strength save in God* is this: the might is movement and the strength is power. When one knows that both his movement and power are not in him, but in his Creator, everything he sees, he sees as from Him. Finally, when the

transfer of acts to causes has been outside of his purview, so that he sees nothing save God Most High, he is one who trusts.

However, the most exalted of its stations is that which Bayazid has said, as related by Abu Musa Daylami:¹⁶⁹⁸ "I asked (Bayazid): 'What is trust?' He said: 'What dost thou say?' I said: 'The shaykhs have said that it is that to the left and the right are all snakes and dragons and the inner essence of thy soul does not stir.' (Bayazid) said: 'That is easy. But, if one sees all the inhabitants of hell in torment and all the inhabitants of heaven in comfort, and one makes a distinction between them in (one's) soul, one is not trusting.'" But that which Abu Musa says was the highest of the degrees and stations of trusting; its prerequisite is that one not shun. The Truly Righteous One¹⁶⁹⁹ (R) put his heel in the hole of a snake while he was in the cave and he was trusting, but not afraid of the snake. Rather, (he was afraid) of the Creator Who gives the snake strength and movement, so that he sees *There is no might and no strength save in God* with respect to it. As for that which Bayazid has said, he was referring to that faith which is the basis of trust, and that faith is dearer. That faith is in justice, wisdom, grace, and mercy. For one knows that whatever He does, He does it as it must be done. Therefore, in this, one makes no difference between torment and ease.

DISCLOSING THE ACTS OF TRUST

Know that all of the stations of religion turn on three elements: knowledge, state, and act. Now, the knowledge and state of trust has been explained, and the act remains. Perhaps a person imagines that the prerequisite of trust is that he leave all affairs to God Most High and not do anything by his own free choice altogether, so that he does not earn, does not put aside anything for tomorrow, and does not flee wolves, snakes, lions, and scorpions. If he becomes sick, he does not take medicine. All of this is a mistake, for all of these (acts) are against the (Religious) Law. However, the Law has lauded trust, so how could it be contrary to the Law?

Indeed, human choice is in obtaining some wealth that he does not have, or in preserving that which he has, or in fending off a loss that has not (yet) occurred, or in removing of a loss that has occurred. Trust in each one of these has a different rule, and it is certainly necessary to explain these four stations:

¹⁶⁹⁸ Mūsā Daylamī: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁶⁹⁹ "the Truly Righteous One" (*Siddiq*): Abu Bakr. see Note 456.

THE FIRST STATION: CONCERNING EARNING AND ACQUIRING BENEFIT

It has three degrees:

THE FIRST is a cause that we have learned from the practice of God Most High without which absolutely no act occurs and refraining from it is madness, not trust; as when a person does not reach for food and does not place it in his mouth so that God Most High may satiate him without food; or so that He may give movement to the food so that it will go into his mouth; or that a person marry and not engage in intercourse so that God may create a child without that. He supposes that this is trust, but it is foolishness. Indeed, trust in any absolute cause is not with act and deed. Rather, it is according to knowledge and state.

As for knowledge, it is that one know that God Most High has created hands, food, power, movement, mouth, and teeth—all of them. As for state, it is that the confidence of one's soul be in God Most High and His grace, not in the food and the hand. For, it may happen that a hand become paralyzed and a person receive food from another. So, one's sight must be (fixed) on His grace in the creation of those and in their preservation, not in his own might and strength.

AT THE SECOND DEGREE are the causes which are not absolute, but without which one usually cannot achieve one's purpose—it is but rarely possible that one achieve it without them—such as taking the provisions for a journey. Here, too, refraining is not a condition of trust, for (taking provisions for a journey) was the Practice of the Messenger (S) and the behavior of the forefathers. But, being trusting is that one does not put the confidence of one's soul upon the provisions, for it may happen that the provisions are carried away. Rather, one places one's confidence in the Creator and the Watcher. Yet, if one goes into the desert without provisions, it is permissible, and out of the perfection of trust; unlike not eating food, for there is no trust in that. However, this is permissible for a person who has two qualities: one is that he has acquired sufficient strength that, if he must remain hungry for a week, he would be able to do so. The other is that he would be able to keep alive by eating plants for a time. If it is thus, usually the countryside is not devoid of that until the time when food appears from some unexpected place.

Ibrahim Khawwas¹⁷⁰⁰ was one of the trusting and had this character. He would go to the desert without provisions, although he would take needle, nail scissors, rope, and a bucket, as these are

¹⁷⁰⁰ Ibrahim Khawwas: Ibrāhīm bin Aḥmad bin Ismāʿīl al-Khawwās, Abū Ishāq. Anecdotes about him are numerous in Qushayri's *Risalah*. Hujwiri devotes a chapter to him, stating that he had attained a high degree of trust (*tawakkul*). Attar also leads off his section on the recent great shaykhs with him.

necessary equipment. Water cannot be drawn from a well without a rope and bucket, and there are no buckets or ropes in the desert. When clothing is torn, there is nothing except a needle to sew it up. Therefore, trust concerning such equipment does not lie in abandoning it. Rather, it is with putting one's confidence in the grace of God Most High, not in (the equipment).

So, if a person sits in a cave where people do not pass by and where there are no plants and says: "I trust (in God)," this is forbidden and he may have condemned himself to death. He has not learned the practice of God Most High, for it is like the trust in a legal dispute, when does not bring the record to the advocate while knowing (the advocate's) rule that he will not speak without the record.

One of the ascetics in bygone times went out of a city and sat in a cave and trusted that his sustenance would reach him. A week passed and nothing had appeared. He grew weak and was near death. Revelation came to the messenger of that time: "Say to him that the King Most High says: 'By My Might, I shall not give thee sustenance so long as thou dost not return to the city and sit amongst men.'" When he returned to the city, they began to bring him things from all sides. Something occurred in the soul of the ascetic. Revelation came to the messenger of that time: "Say to him: 'Thou didst desire to nullify My judgment with thine asceticism. Didst thou not know that I prefer giving the sustenance of My servants by the hands of others of My servants over giving it by My Own hand?'"

The same for a person who hides in his house in a city and closes the door and trusts (in God). This is forbidden, for it is not proper that thou detach thyself completely from the way of definite causes. However, when he does not close the door and sits in trust, it is lawful, with the condition that all of his expectation not be with the door (in the hope) that someone will bring something. All of his soul should not be with people; rather he should keep his soul with God and engage in worship and truly recognize that if he had not detached himself completely the way of causes, he would not be deprived of sustenance.

Here what has been said becomes correct: "If a servant of God flees from his sustenance, his sustenance will seek him out." If one asks of God Most High to give him his sustenance, He says: "O ignoramus! I have created thee, would I not give (thee) sustenance?" This will never be! Therefore, trust is in that which does not arise from the way of causes. Then, one does not see sustenance as from the causes; one sees it as being from the Causer of all Causes. For, mankind all eat the sustenance of God, but some with the degradation of begging; some with sorrow and expectation, such as the businessmen; some with enduring effort and hardship, such as the craftsmen; and some with honor and ease, such as the Sufis who have their eyes fixed upon God. They accept

that which comes to them from God, and they do not see the people in between.

THE THIRD DEGREE is of the causes that are not absolute, nor are they usually needed. Rather, they are considered to be among the stratagems and deep enquiries. Their relationship to earning is like the relationship of cauterization, spells, and auguries to an illness. The Messenger (S) has described those who trust as (those who) do not cast spells and cauterize, not that they do not earn and leave the cities for the deserts.

Therefore, in this station there are three levels of trust:

The first (level) is the degree of the elite, those who go about the desert without provisions. This is the highest. This is because there is the strength to be hungry for five or six days, or to eat plants. If one does not find (these), he does not fear death. He knows that his welfare is in that; for it is possible that the provisions of a person who takes them with him may be taken from him and he may die. There is always the rare possibility (of such an event) on the road, but being wary of that is not an obligation.

The second level is that one does not do business, but also does not go to the desert. Instead, one stays in the city in a mosque, and holds no expectation from people. Instead, (sustenance is) from the kindness and artifice of God Most High.

The third level is that one goes out to earn money, but does so according to rule and the practice of the Law. As we have said in the chapter concerning Earning in this work.¹⁷⁰¹ One is wary of subtle, crafty and tortuous hairsplitting, deceit, and expedencies in the pursuit of his sustenance. If he does become occupied with such means, he is in the degree of a person who casts spells and cauterizes, but he is not trusting.

The proof that refraining from earning is not a prerequisite of trust is that (Abu Bakr) Siddiq was one of the trusting and in this degree he was not denied any state. When he accepted the caliphate, he picked up a bundle of clothes and went to the market to trade. He was asked: "Why dost thou do this in (thy) caliphate?" He answered: "Then, if I leave my own family to perish, I will leave others to perish more speedily." So, they made provision for him from the public treasury. Then he gave all of his time to the caliphate. Therefore, his trust was that he was not eager for wealth, and that which he used to receive, he did not think of as from his own sufficiency and capital, rather he thought of it as from God Most High. He did not love his own property more than the property of other Muslims.

¹⁷⁰¹ Chapter Three of the Second Pillar.

In short, trust without asceticism is not correct. Therefore, asceticism is a condition of trust, even though trust is not a condition of asceticism. Abu Hafṣ Haddād¹⁷⁰² was the spiritual master of Junayd and was one of the trusting. He said: "I kept my trust concealed for twenty years. I would earn a dinar every day in the market. I would not go to the public bath for a single karat¹⁷⁰³ of that. Instead, I would give it all away as charity." Junayd would not say anything about trust in his presence. He used to say: "I am ashamed to talk of a station which is his station in front of him."

However, the trust of Sufis who sit in a place while the servant goes out is weak, just as the trust of a person who engages in trade. There are many conditions for this so that trust may become correct together with that. But, if they sit in the expectation of favors from unknown sources, that is closer to trust. However, when the place has become well known, it is like a market; and it is feared that the tranquillity of the soul will be with that (notoriety). Yet, if the soul pays no attention to it, it is the same as the trust of one who earns.

The principle is that one should not have expectations of people, nor confidence in any agency other than the Causer of Causes. Khawwas says: "I saw Khidr and he was agreeable to my companionship, but I passed him over, lest my soul have confidence in him and become complacent. My trust would be defective." Ahmad Hanbal hired a laborer. He ordered one of his students to give something in addition to (the laborer's) hire. The laborer would not accept it. When he left, Ahmad said: "Take it and go after him. Perhaps he will accept it." (The student) asked: "Why?" (Ahmad) said: "At that time, he saw the greed for it in himself and did not accept it because of that. When that the greed has departed, he would accept it."

In short, the trust of the earner is that his confidence not be in his capital. The sign of this is that if (his earnings) are stolen, his heart does not change and hopelessness about his sustenance does not appear, because he considers his confidence to be in the grace of God Who will deliver his sustenance from some unexpected place. If He does not, his welfare lay in that.

THE REMEDY FOR ACQUIRING THIS STATE

Know that this is an extremely uncommon state: that the soul of a person is not shaken when his goods are stolen causing loss. However, even though it is uncommon and rare, it is not impossible. It comes with the obtaining of faith and certainty in the perfection of (His) grace and

¹⁷⁰² Abū Hafṣ Haddād: al-Nishābūrī, died AH264/877-8CE.
¹⁷⁰³ "karat" (*qirāt*): a 24th part; a weight of 3.3 grains.

mercy and the perfection of (His) power so that one knows that He gives sustenance to many persons who have no capital when a vast amount of capital would be the cause of the destruction of such people. The Messenger (S) said: "There is the servant of God who at night meditates some act in which his destruction lies. God Most High from His Canopy above looks down upon him with the gaze of care and turns that (thought) from him, so that in the morning, he rises gloomy. He is suspicious as to who did that and why. (He suspects) that this is some assault that such-and-such a neighbor has made; yet it was itself the mercy of God Most High that had come upon him." It was for this that 'Umar Khattab (R) used to say: "I have no fear as to whether I shall rise in the morning a poor man or a rich man, for I do not know in which my welfare lies."

Also, one must know that the suspicion and fear of poverty is the inspiration of Satan: *Satan promises you destitution and enjoins upon you lewdness.* (Q. 2:268) In such a state, confidence in the favor of God is the perfection of spiritual insight, especially when one has learned that sustenance is from hidden resources with no one can fathom. In sum, one also does not place confidence in hidden resources. Instead, one does so in the guarantee of the Lord of resources. There was a worshipper in a mosque. The imam of the mosque said several times: "Thou possessest nothing. If thou engaged in some business, it would be better for thee." He replied: "A Jew in this neighborhood has guaranteed that he will deliver two round cakes to me every day." (The imam) said: "If that is the case, now it is lawful if thou dost not engage in business." He said: "O young man, it would indeed be better if thou didst not perform the office of the imam, for the guarantee of a Jew is to thee stronger than the guarantee of God Most High."

The imam of a congregation said to one of the congregation: "Whence dost thou obtain thy food?" (The man) replied: "Wait until I repeat the noon obligatory prayer which I have just prayed behind thee." That is: Thou hast no faith in the guarantee of God Most High. People who have tested this have seen sustenance from unexpected places. Their faith in the verse: *And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof dependeth upon God,* (Q. 11:6) has been confirmed.

Hudhayfah Mar'ashi was asked: "What was the most remarkable thing thou sawest about Ibrahim Adham, whom thou didst serve?" He answered: "We suffered hunger on the way to Makkah. When we reached Kufah, its effect on me was obvious. He said: 'Hast thou become weak from hunger?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'Bring an inkpot and paper.' I did so and he wrote: '*In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.* O Thou Who art the aim of all states and Thou to Whom all points, I am full of praise, grateful, and a rememberer, but I am hungry, thirsty, and naked. I am the guarantor of the three who are my portion. Be Thou the guarantor of the three who are Thy portion.' He handed me

the note and said: 'Go out and do not give thy heart to anyone except God Most High, and give this to the first person thou seest.' I came outside and saw someone sitting on a camel. I gave the note to him. He read it and wept, saying: 'Where is the writer of the note?' I said: 'In the mosque.' He gave me a purse of gold containing 600 dinars. I asked someone who that man was. I was told that he was a Christian. I brought the gold to Ibrahim and related the story. He said: 'Do not touch that gold, for its owner will come right now.' The Christian immediately came and fell at (Ibrahim's) foot and kissed him and became a Muslim."

Abu Ya'qub Basri¹⁷⁰⁴ says: I remained hungry in the Sanctuary for ten days. I became very weak. I came out and saw a turnip that had been thrown down. I said (to myself): 'Let me pick that up.' One would say that there was a cry from inside me: 'Ten days of hunger! Finally, thy portion is a rotten turnip!' I withheld my hand and I returned to the mosque. Someone came in and placed a box of sweet cakes, sugar, and shelled almonds before me. He said: 'We were on the sea and a gale came. We vowed that if we escaped safely, we would give this box to the first poor person we saw.' I took a handful from each one and said: 'I give the rest to thee.' I said to myself: 'The gale was ordered in the midst of the sea so as to prepare thy sustenance, and thou seekest it from some other place?'" Thus, getting to know the likes of these prodigies strengthens faith.

DISCLOSING THE TRUST OF THE FAMILY MAN

Know that the family man is not free to go from door to valley and refrain from the matters of trade because he is entrusted with a family. Rather, the trust of the family man is nothing other than the third degree, and that is the trust of the businessman, as (Abu Bakr) Siddiq did, because trust is certain in two senses: one is that one can endure hunger and be content with all there may be, even plants. The other is that one has the belief that one's sustenance may be hunger and death, and one's welfare may lie in that. But (a man) cannot keep his family in this fashion. Moreover, in reality, his self too is (part of) his family. If they do not have the strength to endure hunger and will become agitated, trust by the abandonment of earning is not appropriate for him. If the household, too, has the strength to endure and is agreeable to trust, still abandoning earning is not permissible. Therefore, the difference is not more than this: that keeping oneself hungry by force is permissible, but (keeping) the members of the household hungry (by force) is not.

¹⁷⁰⁴ Abū Ya'qūb Basrī: Abū Ya'qūb Aqta' Basrī. According to Hujwiri and 'Attar, he was a supporter of Husayn Hallaj (see Note 1685). Qushayri relates the same story about him that Ghazzali cites.

If a person has a complete faith and is occupied with piety, even though he does not earn, the means of his sustenance are apparent. Just as an infant in the womb is helpless to earn, He delivers his sustenance by way of the navel. When he comes out of the mother, He delivers it from the mother's breast. When he can eat food, teeth are created at the proper time. If the mother and father die, he is left an orphan. Just as He had charged the mother with tenderness so that he would be well taken care of, He charges others with tenderness so that mercy for the orphan appears in the hearts of the people. Before this, the tenderness was from one, and others left it to her. When the mother died, He kindled tenderness in a hundred thousand people. When he had grown up, He gave him the power to earn his living. He appointed the compulsion for that over him so that he may take care of himself with a tenderness which is appointed for him, just as his mother took care of him with her own tenderness. If this compulsion is taken back from him, so that he becomes an orphan from his earning and turns to piety, He fills all hearts with his tenderness, so that all say: "This man is busy with God; he must be given whatever is better and finer." Before this, he alone was sympathetic to himself. Now, all the people are become sympathetic to him, just as to an orphan. But, if he can earn a living and he busies himself with uselessness and indolence, this sympathy will not appear in hearts. For him, the abandonment of earning is not permissible. As he is occupied with himself, he should take care of himself. If he turns to God and becomes an orphan from himself, then God makes (their) hearts sympathetic and merciful towards him. For this reason, no pious person is ever seen who has died from hunger.

Therefore, whoever looks into this firm management, how the Lord of the kingdom has arranged the affairs of the kingdom and (His) dominion, and how perfectly He has established it, he necessarily remarks this verse (wherein) He says: *And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof dependeth upon God.* (Q. 11:6) He knows that He has made the kingdom so beautiful and so well arranged that there is loss for no one—except rarely—and that is because his welfare lay in that. It is not because he has refrained from earning. It is also rare that one who has acquired a lot of wealth becomes lost and ruined.

Hasan Basri, who observed this state, said: "I desire that all Basrah would be my family and that a grain of wheat would cost a dinar." Wuhayb bin al-Ward said: "If the sky becomes iron and the earth becomes brass and I worry about my own sustenance, I fear that I would be a polytheist." God Most High transferred sustenance to the sky so that it would be known that no one could touch it. A group went to Junayd and asked: "Should we seek our sustenance?" He answered: "If ye know where to look for it." They said: "Should we desire sustenance from

God?" He replied: "If ye know which one of you He has forgotten, remind Him." They asked: "Should we trust and watch to see what happens by itself?" He said: "Trust with testing is doubt." They said: "What is the stratagem?" He said: "Refraining from stratagem." So, in reality the guarantee of sustenance is sufficiency. Whoever has taken Him as guarantor, must turn toward Him.

(THE SECOND STATION) CONCERNING TRUST IN KEEPING AND STORING

Know that whoever lays up for himself a supply (of sustenance) adequate for a year has fallen from (the state of) trust, for he has not consigned (anything) to way of hidden means and has placed his confidence in external means that will be repeated every year. However, he who is content with the necessity of the moment, with food in the quantity that will sate him and clothing in the amount that he wears—he has been faithful to trust. But, if one stores up the quantity (needed) for forty days, Khawwas says: "Trust is not nullified by that, unless he exceeds it." But Sahl Tustari says: "Hoarding nullifies trust, however much it may be." Abu Talib Makki says: "If it exceeds forty days, trust is not nullified so long as one does not put one's confidence in the stores." Husayn Mughazili was one of the disciples of Bishr. He said: "One day a middle-aged man came to Bishr. Bishr gave me a handful of silver and told me to buy some good and tasty food. I had never heard such a thing from him. I brought the food and he ate it with him. I had never seen him eat anything with another person. When they had eaten, much food was left over. That middle-aged man gathered it up, picked it up and departed. I was astonished that he had done so without permission. Bishr said: 'Art thou astonished?' I said that I was. He said: 'That was Fath Mawsili. He had come today from Mawsil¹⁷⁰⁵ to visit me. He took the food to teach us that if trust is correct, storing does no harm.'"

Therefore, the truth of the matter is that the root of trust is minimal hope, and the rule is that one should not hoard for oneself. So, if one does so, but one considers the property one has as though it were in the treasury of God Most High and one does not place one's confidence in it, trust is not voided. What we have said is relative to a single man. However, if a family man stores (enough) for a year, his trust is not voided, unless (the stored supplies) be in excess (of that). The Messenger (S) used to lay up (supplies) for a year for his household because of their faintheartedness, but nothing for himself from dawn to mid-morning. And if he did, it had no deleterious effect on his trust. Its being in his

¹⁷⁰⁵ Mawsil: a city in northern Iraq on the Tigris River. The English spelling is usually Mosul. The English word "muslin," a kind of cloth, derives from its name.

own hand or the hand of another near him were both the same to him, but he taught the people according to their weakness.

In the Traditions, it is related that one of the Companions of the Bench¹⁷⁰⁶ received the command.¹⁷⁰⁷ Two dinars were found in his clothes. The Messenger (S) said: "Two marks."¹⁷⁰⁸ This has two possible (interpretations): One is that he had deceitfully pretended to being single. This would be two marks of fire as punishment. The other is that he had not been deceptive, but had hoarded; and this would be loss of degree in the next world, just as the sign of the two marks on him detracts from beauty. With respect to another poor man about whom, when he received the command, (the Messenger) said: "He will come on the Day of Resurrection like the full moon. Except for one trait, he would have been like the sun: he had laid up a winter garment for the next winter and a summer garment for the next summer." And he said: "Ye have been given nothing less than certainty and patience." That is, laying up clothing is a defect in certainty. However, it is not wrong to store such things in common use such as jugs, tablecloths, and ewers; that is lawful. The Law of God refers to the appearance each year of bread and clothing from a different quarter, but these household utensils do not appear renewed at just any time and it is not right to oppose its practice. However, summer clothing in winter has no use; keeping it at that time is a weakness in certainty.

EXCURSUS: [FOR WHOM IS STORING UP BETTER?]¹⁷⁰⁹

Know that if a person is such that if he does not lay up stores his soul will be troubled and he will have expectations of people, it is better that he (lay them up). Indeed, if it is thus: that his soul would not be at ease and he would not engage in remembrance (of God) and mediation, except when he has some property from which he derives his sustenance.

¹⁷⁰⁶ "the Companions of the Bench" (*ashāb-i suffah*), also referred to as the People of the Bench (*ahl-i suffah*): They were the poor strangers, without friends or homes, who were accustomed to sit on the bench (or raised plinth) in front of the mosque. Lane describes it as a covered portico; the Arabic word suggests a ledge or a mud-brick platform of the kind one still sees in front of houses in the villages of Egypt. The Prophet would invite some of them to share his meals and send others to his Companions. Their number is given by different sources as up to 400. Hujwiri lists 34 names, including those of Salman the Persian, Abu Dharr, and Abu Darda. As they were credited with asceticism, some have suggested that the term Sufism originates from the imitation of their practices, although for linguistic reasons, this derivation is unlikely. Western scholars, as represented by the article in the EI, are rather skeptical about the story.

¹⁷⁰⁷ "received the command": died.

¹⁷⁰⁸ : "two marks (*dāgh*)": *dāgh* can refer to a mark, scar, spot, freckle, blemish, cautery, tattoo, the mark of a brand, etc. The mark on the foreheads of many Muslims from frequent and energetic prostration is also called a *dāgh*.

¹⁷⁰⁹ From the AA text.

it is better for him that he keep property in the amount of his sustenance. The object of all this is the soul, so that it may be immersed in the remembrance of God Most High. Some souls are thus: that the existence of wealth keeps them occupied (with it) while they are calm in poverty. This is nobler. But some, without the amount of (necessary) sustenance (on hand), do not become at ease. For such a person, property is better. However, if (the soul) is not at ease without excess and luxury, it is not from among the souls of the religious. This itself is not taken into account.

THE THIRD STATION IS RECOGNIZING THE MEANS OF REPELLING LOSS

Know that abandoning any means that is necessary or usual is not a condition of trust. Indeed, if one who trusts closes the door of his house and puts a lock on it so that a thief not steal his goods, his state of trust is not invalidated. If one takes up a weapon and is wary of an opponent, it is the same. If one takes a cloak so that one not be cold on the way, it is the same. If one eats garlic, for example, so that internal heat reduce the effect of the cold on the road, such fine means are incompatible with trust, like cauterization and spells; but refraining from those things which are obvious means (of well-being) is not a condition (of trusting in God).

A desert Arab came to the Messenger. The Messenger (S) asked: "O Arab, what didst thou do with thy camel?" He answered: "I left it and put my trust (in God)." (The Messenger) said: "Tie it up and trust (in God)." But, if some trouble afflicts a person, enduring and not fighting it is a part of trust, as God Most High said: *Disregard their noxious talk and put thy trust in God.* (Q. 33:48) And He said: *We shall surely endure that hurt ye do to us. Let the trusting put their trust in God.* (Q. 14:12) However, enduring the affliction of snakes, scorpions, and predators is not right. One must ward them off.

Therefore, the trust of whoever takes up a weapon in caution against an enemy is that his confidence is not in the strength of the weapon, just as when one places a lock on his door, one's confidence is not in the lock, for there are many locks that cannot stop a thief. The sign of trusting is that if one comes home and his goods have been stolen, he is content with the demands of God Most High and is not grieved. Instead, when he comes out, he says with his demeanor: "I do not put on locks in order to ward off Thy decree, but I do so in agreement with Thy Law. O Lord God, if Thou dost set someone else over this wealth, I am content with Thy command. For, I do not know whether Thou hast created this for the sustenance of another and Thou hast entrusted it to me as a loan, or whether Thou hast created it for me."

So, if (a person) returns home and does not see his goods and becomes grieved, the benefit for him is that he learns that his trust is not sound and it was a self-deception. However, if he is silent and does not complain, at least he has obtained a degree of patience. If he begins to complain and searches for the thief diligently, he has also fallen from the degree of patience and has learned that he is neither one of the patient, nor is he one of the trusting, so that at least he puts aside that claim. This is a total benefit that comes from the thief.

QUESTION: If a person says were he not in need, he would not close the door and not protect (his property). If he keeps it out of need and it is stolen, how is it possible that he would not be grieved?

THE ANSWER is that it becomes possible that since God Most High had given it to him, he supposed that his welfare lay in his possessing it, and the sign of that welfare was that God Most High had given it to him. But now, his welfare lies in that he not possess it, and the sign of that welfare is that it was taken from him. Consequently, he rejoices for his welfare in both situations and he believes that God Most High does not do this with respect to him except that it be for his own good. He himself does not know the face of his own welfare; God knows better. Like the sick person who has a compassionate father who is a physician, if (his father) gives him food and meat, he rejoices and says: "If he had not seen the signs of physical well-being (in me), he would not have given (that) to me." If (the father) withholds meat from him, he rejoices and says: "If it were not that he knew that there is harm in that for my body, he would not have withheld it."¹⁷¹⁰ So long as there is not this faith, trust does not become sound and a discussion is groundless.

[THE RULES OF CONDUCT FOR ONE WHO TRUSTS IN GOD WHEN HIS GOODS ARE STOLEN]

Know that the one who trusts should observe six rules of conduct:

ONE (RULE) is that even though one closes the door, one does not investigate strenuously and set many fastenings. One does not ask the neighbors to patrol; rather, one is relaxed. Malik bin Dinar used to tie the door of his house with a rope and would say: "If it were not because of the dog, I would not tie it with a rope."

¹⁷¹⁰ It was generally considered that meat and rich food was harmful for a sick person. If the physician father gave his son such food, it would mean that the father believed his son to be in good health. The father's withholding it would be an indication that he believed his son to be ill and consequently the food injurious to his son's health.

THE SECOND RULE is that whatever one knows to be valuable and which a thief would crave should not be kept at home, for that would encourage the thief in sinning. Mughirah¹⁷¹¹ sent a jug of water to Malik bin Dinar. After that, Malik sent someone (to Mughirah): "Come and take it back, for Satan has thrown an insinuation in my heart that a thief may come and steal the jug." He did not want to have such suspicions nor (did he want) the thief to fall into sin. When Abu Sulayman Darani heard that, he said: "This is from the weakheartedness of the Sufis. He is an ascetic in the world; what has he to do with a thief's stealing?" This opinion is more complete.

THE THIRD RULE is that when one comes out, one declares an intention that if some (property) be taken by a thief, it is lawful (to him) if he is poor and in need. If (the person robbed) is rich, (he declares it lawful for the thief) so that (the thief) would not (need to) steal another's property. His property is a sacrifice for the property of other Muslims. This is a mercy both for the thief and for other Muslims. He knows that, by this intention, the decree of God Most High will not be changed, and he will also receive the spiritual reward of giving charity seven-hundredfold, whether he is robbed or not, for he has made the intention for good, as it is related in the Traditions that a person when lying with his wife should not perform *coitus interruptus*, but plant the seed. Whether a child comes or not, for him is recorded the reward of a son who will fight in the way of God Most High to be killed and acquire the spiritual reward of the martyrs for him. This is because he did what he was required to do. If there were a child, its creation and life would not be his, but his spiritual reward would be according to his deed.¹⁷¹²

THE FOURTH RULE is that one not grieve and know that one's welfare lies in (the property's) being stolen. If one has said: "I have charged it to the Way of God Most High," one should not look for it. If it should be returned, he should not accept it. If he takes it back, it becomes his property, for one does not forfeit the (the right of) ownership merely by the utterance of an intention. Nonetheless, this (total abandonment) is commended in the station of trust. A camel was stolen from Ibn 'Umar. He was active (in looking for it) until he had exhausted himself. Then, he said: "(Let it be) in the Way of God," and went to the mosque. He performed formal prayer. Someone came in, (saying): "The camel is in

¹⁷¹¹ Mughirah: possibly Mughirah bin Sa'id al-'Ijli (d. AH119/737CE). He was a Kufan libertine and a eulogizer of wine.

¹⁷¹² That is, he had fulfilled his duty by completing the intercourse. The creation of the child and its life were not up to him, but rather to God. However, he would obtain his spiritual reward for attempt. In my copy of *The Revival*, there is a note stating that the editor could not find the source of this Tradition.

such-and-such a place." (Ibn 'Umar) put on his footgear and then said: "*I seek refuge with God!*"¹⁷¹³ He sat down and said: "I had said that (I had surrendered my right to it) in the Way of God! I shall not go after it now."

One of the shaykhs says: "In a dream, I saw a brother in Paradise, but he was sad. I asked: 'Why art thou sad in Paradise?' He answered: 'This sadness will stay with me until the Day of Resurrection because I was shown the greatest stations on High, which are not in all of Paradise. I was delighted. When I headed toward that, a cry came: 'Turn him back for this is for a person who has pursued the way.' I said: 'What is pursuing the way?' He said: 'Thou saidst that some thing was in the way of God, then thou didst not follow through. If thou hadst completed that, all of this would have been given thee.'"

In Makkah, a person woke up from sleep. He had had a purse containing gold. He did not find it. One of the great among the devout was there and he was accused. He was taken to a room. He asked: "How much gold was there?" He gave (the man) as much gold as he said. When (the first) went out, he heard that one of his comrades had taken his purse as a joke. He returned and brought the gold the devotee had given him. However much (the first) pleaded, (the devotee) would not accept it, saying: "I have consigned it to the way of God Most High." In the end, (the first man) ordered that it be distributed among the poor. In the same way, if a person brings bread to give to a poor person and he has gone away, the forefathers disliked that it be brought back home and eaten (there). It had to be given to another poor person.

THE FIFTH RULE is that one not supplicate God for evil to befall the thief or an oppressor; for by that, both trust and asceticism are nullified. Whoever grieves for the past is not an ascetic. A horse worth several thousand dirhams was stolen from Rabi' Khaytham.¹⁷¹⁴ He said: "I was watching them steal it." He was asked: "Why didst thou allow them?" He replied: "I was doing something that I liked better: I was performing formal prayer." They supplicated to God that evil to befall (the thief). (Rabi') said: "Do not do that, for I have made it lawful for him and have given it to him as charity." Someone was told: "Supplicate for evil to befall the oppressor." He said: "He has oppressed himself, not me. Let that evil suffice for him. I cannot increase it upon him." In the Traditions, it is related: "The servant of God supplicates for evil to befall

¹⁷¹³ "*I seek refuge with God!*" (*astaghfir allāh!*): Among the many uses among Muslims of this very common ejaculation, one of the most common is after one has unwittingly committed a mistake. Ibn 'Umar's first response after hearing that his camel had been found was to go to get it, but then he remembered that he had handed it over in the way of God and it was no longer his, and so he gave it up.

¹⁷¹⁴ Rabi' Khaytham: See Rabi' Khuthaym.

the oppressor and speaks ill of him until his claim (of retribution against him) is redeemed. It may happen that nothing remains for the oppressor (to be punished for)."¹⁷¹⁵

THE SIXTH RULE is that one should become sorrowful for the thief and have mercy for him, for he has committed a sin and he will be trapped in its punishment. One is grateful that one is oppressed and not an oppressor, and that the loss was of property, not of faith. If sorrow for the person who has considered a sin lawful does not occupy his soul, he has withheld counsel and compassion from mankind. Fudayl 'Iyad saw a boy stealing some of his goods. He wept. (Someone) asked him: "Art thou weeping for the goods?" He said: "No, for the wretch who did such a thing. On the Day of Resurrection, he will have no excuse."

THE FOURTH STATION: CONCERNING THE CURE OF THE ILLNESS AND
THE REMOVAL OF THE HARM WHICH COMES FROM IT

Know that the cure is in three steps:

ONE is definite, as the cure for hunger is bread and the cure for thirst is water and the cure for fire that strikes a place is that thou pourest water on it. Refraining from these is not trust. Instead, it is forbidden (not to act).

THE SECOND is not definite, nor is it conjectural, except for that which is conjectural, such as auguries, cauterizations, and spells. The condition of trust is refraining from those (activities)—as is related in the Traditions—for, performing them is the sign of deep enquiry into means and putting confidence in them. The strongest of these is cauterization, then spells, and the weakest is taking auguries, which are called bad omens

THE THIRD STEP is between both steps, that which is not definite, but usually conjectural, such as venisection, cupping, taking purgatives, and treating heat with cold and cold with heat. Refraining from these is not unlawful, nor is it a condition of trust. It may be that, in some circumstances, doing them is preferred to not doing them. The proof that abandoning them is not a condition of trust is the words of the Messenger (S) and his deeds.

As for his words: he said: "O servants of God, use medicine." And he said: "There is no illness for which there is no medicine save death. But it may be that it is not known or that it is known." He was asked: "Do medicine and spells change the decree of God?" He

¹⁷¹⁵ That is, by his supplications and speaking ill of the oppressor, he is taking revenge against him. It may happen that by these means he will erase the obligation due the injured party at the Resurrection when all accounts are cleared.

answered: "These, too, are part of the divine decree." And he said: "I did not pass any group of angels on the night of the Night Journey that did not tell me to command my people to cupping." And he said: "Cup on the 17th, the 19th, and the 21st of the month, lest (your) blood destroy you." And he said: "By the command of God Most High, blood is a cause of death. There is no difference between expelling blood from the body, a snake from clothing, or from putting out a fire in a house. All of these are causes of destruction, and refraining from this is not a condition of trust (in God)." And he said: "Cupping on Tuesday the 17th of a month prevents a year's illness." This was related in an interrupted Tradition.¹⁷¹⁶ He ordered venisection for Sa'd Mu'adh. 'Ali (R) had a sore eye. He said: "Do not eat this"—meaning dates—"but eat this!"—meaning turnip leaves with cooked barley pottage. He said to Suhayb (R): "Art thou eating dates with an eye ache?" (Suhayb) said: "I am eating with the other side of my mouth." The Messenger laughed.

As for his deeds: he would apply collyrium to his eyes every night and be cupped every month and take medicine every year. When revelation came and his head ached, he would apply henna to it. When some place (on his body) was wounded, he would apply henna to it and sometimes put earth on it. There are many of these and the have been collected in a book called *The Medical Practice of the Prophet*.

Moses (A) fell sick. The Children of Israel said: "The remedy for that is in such-and-such a thing." He said: "I will use no medicine so that He may send good health." He took no medication for that illness. They said: "It is a medicine well known, proven, and (the illness) will vanish instantly." He said: "I want the sickness to remain." Revelation came: "By My Might, I shall not send thee good health until thou takest the medicine." He took the medicine and became better, (but) something had befallen in his soul. Revelation came: "Didst thou desire to nullify My Wisdom with thine own trust? Who placed the benefit in the medicine other than I?" One of the prophets complained of his weakness: revelation came: "Eat meat and drink milk." Some people lamented the ugliness of their offspring to the messenger of the time. Revelation came: "Inform their women to eat quinces during their pregnancy." They ate them and their children became fine. After that, they would eat quinces during their pregnancies and, at the time of childbirth, ripe dates.

Thus, from all of this it is clear that medicine is a cause of cure, just as bread and water are causes of satiety. All is by the contrivance of the Causer of Causes. In the Traditions, it is related: "Moses (A) said: 'O Lord, from whom is sickness and from whom is healing?' He said: 'Both are from Me.'" (Moses) asked: "Then what is the use of a physician?" He

¹⁷¹⁶ "interrupted (*munqati'*) Tradition": A Tradition, the chain of narrators of which is interrupted. Usually, it means that the link in the second generation, the Followers (*tābi'in*), is missing.

answered: 'To eat of My sustenance and to please the souls of My servants.'" So, in this, too, trust is with both knowledge and the state that puts confidence in the Creator of the medicine, not in the medicine; for many have taken medicine and died.

EXCURSUS: (WHY CAUTERIZATION IS PROHIBITED)

Know that cauterization is a custom for some people, but they fall from trust through that. Indeed, it itself has been prohibited, while spells are not prohibited. This is because burning with fire is a dangerous injury, and there is fear that it will spread, unlike cupping and venisection; neither is the benefit so apparent as is the benefit of venisection. Other things stand in its place. 'Imran bin al-Husayn¹⁷¹⁷ became sick. He was told to cauterize, but he did not. When they insisted, he did it and became better. Then he said: "Before the cauterization, I saw a light and heard a voice and the angels were greeting me, but when I was cauterized, all became veiled from me. Then I repented and sought refuge (with God)." Then he said to Mutarrif bin 'Abdullah: "Then, after a while, God Most High returned that blessing (of the vision) to me."

DISCLOSING THAT NOT TAKING MEDICINE IN SOME SITUATIONS IS BETTER

And this is not in contradiction to the Messenger (S), because many of the saints would not accept treatment. It may be that someone says: "If this were a perfection, the Messenger (S) would not have taken medicine." This difficulty vanishes when thou knowest that there are six reasons for not taking medicine:

ONE (REASON) is that a person is an ecstatic and has learned that his hour of death is come. For this reason when (Abu Bakr) Siddiq was ill and he was asked whether he wanted a physician, he said: "The physician has seen me." He said: "*Surely I do that which I desire.*"

THE SECOND REASON is that the ailing person is occupied with the fear of the Hereafter, and the soul has no treatment. As when Abu Darda (R) was ill, he was asked: "What is thy complaint?" He replied: "The burden of sins." They asked: "What dost thou hope for?" He replied: "The mercy of God Most High." They asked: "Dost thou want a physician?" He said: "The physician has made me ill." Abu Dharr (R) had a pain in his eyes. He was asked: "Why dost thou not treat it?" He

¹⁷¹⁷ 'Imrān bin Husayn: No information about him at present.

answered: "I have more important work." The parable of this is that a person be brought before a king to be given punishment. A person says: "Thou shouldst not eat bread." He says: "Of what concern is eating and hunger?" This is not a gibe at a person who eats food and in opposition to him. It is being completely engrossed, as when Sahl was asked: "What is thy food?" He replied: "My food is the remembrance of the Living, the Sustainer." They said: "We are asking about nourishment." He said: "(My) nourishment is knowledge." They said: "We are asking about food." He said: "(My) food is the remembrance of God." They said: "We are asking about the food for the body." He said: "Forget the body and surrender to the Maker."

THE THIRD REASON is that it may happen that the sickness be chronic and medicine, in that sick person's view, like a spell that is rarely beneficial. The person who does not know medicine may look upon most medicines in that manner. Rabi' Khaytham says: "I intended to treat my own sickness, but I thought about the 'Ad and the Thamud,¹⁷¹⁸ and those who had passed on, with many doctors among them. They are all dead and medicine did not avail (them)." Apparently, he did not consider medicine one of the external causes.

THE FOURTH REASON is that the ailing person does not desire his illness to disappear so long as there is a spiritual reward for his ailment, or (he wishes) to test his own endurance. In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High tries a servant with calamity, just as gold is tested in fire. There is the person who comes out of the illness pure and there is the person who comes out ruined. Sahl Tustari (R) ordered others to take medicine, but would not take medicine for his own ailment. He used to say: "Formal prayer in illness in the sitting position is better than formal prayer standing is for the healthy."¹⁷¹⁹

THE FIFTH REASON is that one has many sins and desires that the illness atone for them. For in the Traditions, it is related: "Fever attaches itself to the servant of God until it has cleansed him of his sins so that none remains, just as there is no dust on hail." Jesus (A) says: "He is not

¹⁷¹⁸ "the Ad and the Thamud": two peoples mentioned a number of times in the Quran. The tribe of Ad was located in southern Arabia and the prophet Hud was sent to them. They rejected his message and were destroyed. The prophet Salih was sent to the Thamud who also disobeyed him with a similar outcome. (Q. 7:63) Their stories are discussed in the translator's *The Old Testament: An Islamic Perspective* and in a volume taken from it: *Abraham*.

¹⁷¹⁹ That is, performing the entire formal prayer while sitting, a concession for those for whom standing, or the changes of position from standing to sitting and sitting to standing that are part of the outward aspect of formal prayer are difficult by reason of sickness, weakness, or physical disability.

a knower who does not rejoice at illness and misfortunes in his body and property, in the hope of atonement for his sins." Moses (A) looked at a sick person and said: "O Lord God, have mercy upon him." (God) said: "How may I have mercy upon him with regard to something by which I shall be merciful to him? For by (the illness), I make atonement for him for his sins and I increase his degrees."

THE SIXTH REASON is that knowing that wantonness, heedlessness, and rebellion arise from bodily health, one desires to remain sick so that he not fall into heedlessness. He for whom some good is desired is always chastised by calamity and illness. Because of this, it has been said that the believer is not devoid of three things: poverty, illness, and abjectness. In the Traditions, it is related that God Most High says: "Illness is My chain and poverty is My prison. I put a person in chains and in prison because I love him." Therefore, since bodily health leads to sin, purity lies in illness.

'Ali (R) saw a people adorned. He asked: "What is this?" They said: "It is their festival day." He said: "Any day in which we do not commit a sin is our festival." One of the great asked someone: "How art thou?" He answered: "In good health." (The other) said: "Any day thou dost not commit a sin, thou art in good health. If thou (sindest), which illness is there that is more difficult than that?"

And, it has been said: "Pharaoh claimed to be a god because he had lived for four-hundred years with neither headache nor fever. If he was taken by a pain in his temples for an hour, he would not be concerned about it excessively." And it has been said: "If a servant of God has been ill once or twice and not repented, the Angel of Death says: 'O heedless one! How many times have I sent my messenger to thee and to no avail!'" And it has been said: "A believer should not be devoid of sorrow, sickness, fear, or loss for forty days."

The Messenger (S) wanted a woman in marriage. They said: "She has never been sick." They thought that this was praise for her. He said: "I do not desire her." One day, he talked about headache. A desert Arab asked: "What is a headache? I have never been sick." (The Messenger) said: "Keep away from me! Tell anyone who wants to see an inhabitant of hell to look upon him." 'Ayishah (R) asked: "O Messenger of God, Is there anyone in the degree of the martyrs?" He said: "Yes, a person who remembers his death twenty times a day and there is no doubt that he remembers the death-sickness even more." So, for these reasons there are some who have not sought treatment, but the Messenger (S) had no need of such (abstention): he took treatment because of that.

In summary, avoiding external means does not contradict trusting. Umar (R) was traveling to Syria. News came that there was a

great plague raging there. Some said that they should not proceed and others said that they should not avoid destiny. 'Umar (R) said: "If one of you has two valleys, one filled with fresh plants, the other dry, to whichever the sheep lead you is the one which has been destined." Then, he sought 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf to learn what he would say. He said: "I heard from the Messenger (S), who said: 'Do not go to a place where ye have heard there is a plague.'¹⁷²⁰ If ye are in a city where plague appears, stay there and do not go out and do not flee.'" Then, 'Umar gave thanks that his own opinion was in agreement with the Tradition and the Companions were in agreement with that. Moreover, the prohibition against going out is because if the healthy leave, the sick will be lost and perish. And then, when (the plague) has infected the air, there is no advantage in leaving the city. In some of the Traditions, it is said that fleeing from that is like fleeing from the (opposing) ranks of the unbelievers. This is because it will dishearten the sick and there will be no one to give them food. Those (who remain) will certainly perish while the escape from (this fate) by the person who flees is doubtful.

EXCURSUS: [CONCEALING ILLNESS IS A CONDITION OF TRUST]¹⁷²¹

Know that concealing an illness is a condition of trust. Moreover, disclosing it and complaining is disliked, except with an excuse: as when a physician orders or desires that one disclose his weakness and expel languor and rashness from oneself. When 'Ali (R) was asked during an illness whether he was better and felt well, he said: "No." They looked at one another in astonishment as to why he had said that. So he said: "I am displaying my courage and manliness to God Most High!" This was suitable for his determination, for with that strength and size of his, he displayed his own helplessness. About this, ('Ali) said: "O Lord, give me patience for my sustenance." The Messenger (S) said: "Ask God for well-being and do not ask for calamity." Therefore, when there is no excuse, if a sick person discloses it in the manner of a complaint, it is forbidden; but (if it is) not in complaint, it is permissible. Nonetheless, it is preferred that one refrain. For, it may be that one exaggerate in what one says and perhaps one may be suspected of complaint. It has been said that moaning is recorded against the sick person because it is a display. Iblis got nothing out of Job (A) except a moan. When Fudayl 'Iyad, Bishr, and Wuhayb bin al-Ward (R) became ill, they closed their doors lest anyone learn of it. They used to say: "We do not desire anyone to visit us when we are ill, for then one must complain of the illness." *Peace!*

¹⁷²⁰ "plague" (*wabā*): or cholera.

¹⁷²¹ From the AA text.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCERNING LOVE, LONGING, AND CONTENTMENT

Know that the love of God Most High is the most exalted of the stations. Indeed, the objective of all stations is that. A quarter of the Destroyers are for the purification of all that takes one from the love for God Most High. All of the Delivers that we have discussed before this—repentance, patience, asceticism, fear, hope, etc.—are the preliminaries for this, and all that is after these—such as longing and contentment—is the fruit and consequence of those. The *ultima thule* of perfection of the servant of God is that the love for God Most High triumph in one's soul, so that his totality is engulfed (by that). If it is not thus, well, it should be more dominant than the love for other things. Coming to understand the true nature of love is so difficult that some of the scholastic theologians have denied it and have said: "It is not possible to love a person who is not of thy kind. The meaning of love (of God) is obedience and nothing else."

Whoever thinks this way has no inkling of the basis of religion. The explanation of this is important and we shall first relate the evidentiary proofs of the Religious Law and Doctrine to prove the love for God Most High. Then, we shall explain its true nature and rules.

THE VIRTUE OF THE LOVE FOR GOD MOST HIGH

Know that all of the people of Islam are in agreement that the love of God Most High is a religious obligation. God Most High says: *He loves them and they love Him*. Q. 5:54) and the Messenger (S) says: "A person does not have complete faith until he loves God Most High and the Messenger (S) more than all else." They asked: "What is faith?" He replied: "That one love God and the Messenger more than all else." And he said: "A servant (of God) is not a believer until he loves God and the Messenger more than his kin, family, wealth, all mankind." And he said: "If ye love your father, children, wealth, dwelling, and all that ye have more than God Most High and the Messenger (S), be prepared until the command arrives: Say: *If your fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, (and your wives, and your tribe, and the wealth ye have acquired, and merchandise for which ye fear that there will be no sale, and dwellings ye desire are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving in His way; then wait till God bringeth His command to pass. God guideth not the wrongdoing folk.)* (Q. 9:24)¹⁷²²

¹⁷²² Assuming the reader would be familiar with the Quran, Al-Ghazzali has written "the verse" (*al-āyah*) instead of quoting the full verse completely. We have added the rest of the verse between parentheses.

Someone said to the Messenger (S): "I love thee." (The Messenger) said: "Be prepared for poverty." In the Traditions, it is related that when the Angel of Death took the soul of (Abraham) the Friend (A), (Abraham) said: "Hast thou ever seen a friend take the life of a friend?" Revelation came to him: "Hast thou ever seen a friend abhor the sight of a friend?" (Abraham) said: "Now take my soul, for I have given consent."

In a supplication of the Messenger (S) is: "*O God, endow me with Thy love and the love of him who loves Thee and the love of him who brings me closer to Thy love and makes Thy love more beloved to me than cool water.*" He said: "O Lord God, give me Thy love and the love of Thy friends and the love of everything that brings me closer to Thee as sustenance. Make Thy love more beloved to me than cold water to the thirsty."¹⁷²³ A desert Arab came and asked: "O Muhammad, when will the Resurrection occur?" (The Messenger) said: "What hast thou laid up for that day?" He answered: "I do not have much formal prayer and fasting, but I love God and (His) Messenger." He said: "Tomorrow, everyone will be with the one whom he loves."

(Abu Bakr) Siddiq (R) said: "Whoever tastes the pure love of God Most High becomes diverted from the world and becomes averse to mankind." Hasan Basri said: "Whoever has come to know God loves Him; whoever has come to know the world holds it in enmity." So long as a believer is not heedless (of the world), he is not happy; when he considers (it), he becomes saddened.

Jesus (A) passed by some thin and weak people. He asked: "What has befallen you?" They replied: "We have been consumed by the fear of God Most High." He said: "It is incumbent upon God Most High to protect you from the fire." He passed by another group who were thinner and weaker. He asked: "What has befallen you?" They replied: "The desire for Paradise has consumed us." He said: "It is incumbent upon God Most High to fulfill your desire." He passed by another group who were weaker and thinner than both of the (other) groups and their faces shone with light. He asked: "What has befallen you?" They replied: "The love for God Most High has consumed us." He sat with them and said: "You are the Proximate Ones; I have been commanded to sit with you."

Sari Saqati (R) says: "Tomorrow every person will be called back to the prophets. It will be said: 'O people of Moses! O people of

¹⁷²³ It will be noted that Al-Ghazzali's Persian translation is slightly different from the Arabic text. Both Persian texts—HK and AA—use the word *man* in the Arabic passage which I have rendered as "him who," while Al-Ghazzali renders the Persian phrase he uses in that place as "everything that" (*har chizī kih*). In Arabic, the pronoun *man* is used for persons; the pronoun for things would normally be *mā*. The Arabic text also does not include the phrase "to the thirsty" (*bar tishnah*) at the end.

Jesus! O people of Muhammad!' —except to the lovers of God. It will be said (to them): 'O friends of God, come to God Most High.' Their souls will be completely taken aback from joy." In some of the books of the prophets, it is (written) that God Most High says: "My servant, I love thee: by My right over thee, thou too lovest Me."

THE TRUE NATURE OF LOVE

Know that this love is so difficult that some have denied it with respect to God Most High. An explanation of this is important, even though discussion about this concept is subtle and not everyone can comprehend it. However, we shall illustrate it with examples so that whoever makes the effort may understand.

Know that the root of love must first be recognized as to what it is. Know that the meaning of love is the inclination of (one's) nature to something that is pleasant. If that inclination is strong, it is called passionate love. Hatred is the loathing by (one's) nature for something that is unpleasant. Wherever there is no "pleasant" or "unpleasant," there is neither love nor hatred.

Now thou must learn what "pleasant" is. Know that things are, with respect to thy nature, of three kinds: Some are agreeable to (thy) nature and they suit it. Indeed, (thy) nature itself demands them. That which is agreeable to (thy) nature is called "pleasant." Some are disagreeable and unsuited and opposite to the demand of (thy) nature. They are called "unpleasant." That which is neither agreeable nor opposed is called neither "pleasant" nor "unpleasant."

Now thou must learn that nothing is pleasant or unpleasant to thee so long as thou art first not aware of it. Being aware of things is the charge of the senses and the intellect. The senses are five, and for each one of these there is a pleasure, and because of that pleasure, one likes it; that is, (thy) nature inclines to it. The sensory pleasure of the eye is in beautiful forms and in greenery, flowing water, and the like. It necessarily loves them. The pleasure of the ears is in beautiful and rhythmic voices (and sounds). The pleasure of the nose is in sweet scents. The pleasure of the taste is in foods. The pleasure of touch is in soft touches. All of these are love; that is, (thy) nature has an inclination towards them, and animals have all of these, too.

The sixth sense is something in the soul that is called "reason," called "vision," called "light, or by whatever term thou wishest to utter. It is that which distinguishes a human being from beasts. It also has perceptions which are pleasant to it and which are dear to it, just as other pleasures are agreeable to the senses and dear to the senses. About this the Messenger (S) said: "Three things of the world have been made my friend: women, sweet scents, and my delight in formal prayer. He placed

the highest degree on formal prayer. Whoever is bestial is unaware of the soul and knows naught but the senses. He will never believe that formal prayer is pleasing and that it may be loved. A person who is dominated by his intellect, and is more distant from the attributes of the beasts, prefers the observation with the inner eye of the beauty of the Divine Presence, the wonders of His handiwork, the perfection and majesty of His Essence and Attributes over the observations with the outer eye of fine forms and greenery and flowing water. Indeed, in his view, all of these become lowly after the beauty of the Divine presence has been revealed to him.

**DISCLOSING THE REASONS OF LOVE SO THAT IT BECOMES CLEAR
FROM THAT THAT NOTHING IS DESERVING OF LOVE
SAVE GOD MOST HIGH.**

[Know that the reasons of love are five.]

THE FIRST REASON is that a human being loves himself, loves his own perfection, and loves his own survival; and (that he) is hostile to his own destruction, even if he would be annihilated without pain and without sorrow. Why would he not like that? When the cause of love is the agreement with one's nature, what thing would be more agreeable and more suited to one than existence, the continuation of existence, and the perfection of one's qualities? And what would be more contrary and more unsuited (to it) than one's extinction and the extinction of one's perfection and one's qualities?

Therefore, for this reason a father loves his child whose continuance he considers as his own continuance. Since he is helpless with respect to his own continuance, he also loves that which in some way resembles continuation. In reality, he loves himself. He also loves wealth; for, that is his instrument in his survival and in the survival of his qualities. He loves (his) relatives; for, he considers them of his own plumage and he recognizes himself completed by them.

THE SECOND REASON is good works. One naturally loves whoever has done good deeds to him. About this, it has been said: "*Man is the servant of the good deed.*" The Messenger (S) said: "O Lord, give no sinner the power to do good to me, for then my soul will love him." That is, this is (human) nature and cannot be forced to change. In reality, it also returns to one's self-love. A good deed is that which is done for one's continuance, or for the perfection of one's qualities. However, a man loves a healthy body causelessly.¹⁷²⁴ He loves the doctor because of

¹⁷²⁴ "causelessly" (*nah bi-illatī*): that is, "inherently," without regard to good works, while he loves the doctor by *cause* of his curing him.

good health and for that. In the same way, he loves himself causelessly, but he loves a person who does some good for him for (his) doing of the good.

THE THIRD REASON is that one loves a benefactor even though (that person) has not done anything good for him. For if a person hears that there is a beneficent king in Morocco, learned and just, and that all of the people are comfortable with him, his nature will incline to him; even though he knows that he shall never reach Morocco and shall never see his good works.

THE FOURTH REASON is that one loves a person who is good, not for something that can be gotten from him. Instead, (it is) for his nature and his goodness. Beauty itself is naturally beloved for itself. It is permissible for a person to love beautiful forms, not out of carnality, (but) as one loves greenery and flowing water, not for eating, but for the pleasure the eye itself (derives) from their beauty. Beauty and goodness are loved. If the beauty of God Most High were to become manifest, it would be proper that one be able to love Him. The meaning of what beauty is will be discussed below.

THE FIFTH REASON is that there is in love a compatibility between two natures. There is the person whose nature suits (that of) another and one loves another not for (the other's) goodness. Sometimes, this relationship is apparent, as when one child becomes intimate with another, or one businessman with another, or one scholar with another; each to his own kind. And sometimes a relationship befalls (one) that is hidden in the basis of the in-born temperament and the heavenly causes that are dominant at the time of birth, which no one can penetrate. As the Messenger (S) put it in words when he said: "*Souls are mobilized hosts; those who know each other are united, those who do not know each other differ (among themselves).*" He said: "For souls there is knowing one another and being strangers." For, in reality, acquaintance may happen and they become familiar with one another. This acquaintance is the expression of the compatibility that we have discussed and one cannot follow its path in detail.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF WHAT BEAUTY IS

Know that a person who is close to the beasts and knows nothing but the perceptions of the eye may perhaps say: "Beauty¹⁷²⁵ has no

¹⁷²⁵ "beauty": *nīkāyī* (in modern Persian, it is usually written *nīkāʔī*) can mean "beauty, goodness, elegance, favor," etc. Accordingly, the adjectival form *nīkā* can mean

meaning, except that that the face is pink and white and the limbs are in proportion." The result of that comes from shape and color. The beauty of whatever does not have shape and color is unimportant. This is an error, for the intelligent say: "This line is beautiful, the voice is beautiful, the clothing is beautiful, the horse is beautiful, the house is beautiful, the garden is beautiful, and the city is beautiful." Therefore, the meaning of beauty in anything is that every perfection appropriate for it be present in it and that it not lack in anything. The perfection of each thing is of a different kind. The perfection of calligraphy is in the proportion of the letters, one to another, and other values. There is no doubt that looking at beautiful calligraphy or a fine building is a pleasure. So, beauty is not restricted to the form of a beautiful face. All of these (kinds of beauty) are perceived by the external eye.

A person may admit this, but say: "How is something beautiful which cannot be perceived by the eye?" This, too, is ignorance. We say such-and-such a character trait is held to be good, and virtue is considered good. They say that knowledge with piety is very good and that courage with generosity is good; and abstinence, contentment, and eating frugally are better than all things. The likes of these are famous, but none of them can be seen by the external eye. Instead, they can be perceived by the vision of the intellect. We have discussed these in the chapter about the Discipline of the Self in this book.¹⁷²⁶ There are two forms (of beauty): the external and the internal. A good character is an internal form and it is naturally loved.

The proof of this is that a person may love Imam Shafi'i. Indeed it is not impossible that one love Abu Bakr and 'Umar (R). How would it be impossible that there be a person who would give generously of wealth and life for (his) love of them, though he has himself not seen them? Their (physical) forms have now become dust; but this love is for the beauty of their internal forms, (their) knowledge, piety, policies, and the like. In the same way, the messengers are loved for this. Whoever loves (Abu Bakr) Siddiq (R) loves him in any form that may be. One loves him for that quality by which he is *Siddiq* (Truly Righteous). Truthfulness and knowledge are [the qualities of]¹⁷²⁷ a single part, called "an indivisible part," of the nature of the truly righteous. It has neither shape nor color. Some hold that it occupies space and others hold that it does not occupy space. Of whatever quality it may be, it does not possess shape and color. That is the beloved, not external skin and flesh.

Therefore, whoever possess intellect does not deny internal beauty and prefers that to the external form. There are many differences

"beautiful, good, fine, elegant," etc. In this passage, Ghazzali is contrasting the external beauty/goodness with the internal variety.

¹⁷²⁶ Chapter One of the Third Pillar.

¹⁷²⁷ From the AA text.

between a person who loves an image painted upon a wall and a person who loves a prophet. Indeed, a small child, when he wants to refer to a person among those whom he loves, does not describe his eyes and eyebrows. Rather, he describes his generosity, bravery, knowledge, and power. When he wants to refer (to someone) he dislikes, he describes his inner ugliness, not his external ugliness. For this reason, the Companions are loved and Abu Jahl is hated. So, it has become clear that beauty is two: external and internal. The beauty of the inner form is loved just as external beauty; rather, it is more loved by whoever has a modicum of intellect.

**DISCLOSING THAT HE WHO IS DESERVING OF LOVE IN REALITY
IS GOD MOST HIGH AND HE ALONE**

Know that in reality there is none deserving of love save God Most High. Whoever loves another does so out of ignorance, except for a reason that is connected with God, as loving the Messenger (S) is also loving Him. Whoever loves a person, loves his messenger, his lover, and his beloved. Consequently, the love for scholars and the pious is also the love for God Most High. Thou knowest this by looking at the reasons for love:

AS FOR THE FIRST REASON, it is that one loves oneself and the perfection of oneself. It is a necessary of this that one love God, for one's being and the existence of one's attributes and perfection is all from one's existence. If it were not for His grace, one's creation would not be. If it were not for His grace in sustaining him, one would not endure. If it were not for His grace in the creation of the bodily members and endowments of his perfection, there would be nothing more lacking than he. Therefore, strange is the person who flees from the heat and loves the shade of the tree, but who does not love the tree that establishes the shade for him. He knows that just as the establishment of the shade is with the tree, the establishment of the existence of (his) essence and attributes is from God. Unless one does not know this (truth) itself, how can one not love Him? There is no doubt that the ignorant person does not love Him, because loving Him is the fruit of knowing Him.

THE SECOND REASON is that one loves a person who does good to him. For this reason, loving anyone other than God Most High is out of ignorance, for no one will not be able to do good for him—nor has done so—except God Most High. The kinds of His blessings to His

servants are uncountable, as we have discussed in the chapter on Meditation and Gratitude.¹⁷²⁸

However, those good deeds which thou ascribest others, (thou doest) out of ignorance. No one gives thee anything until that time a person is sent with a commission that he cannot disobey. It is thrown into his soul that his rectitude, welfare, and benefit in religion or in the world lie in that he give something to (another) in order to reach his own goal. As a result, he gave (it to thee) for his own purposes and made thee a means to attain the spiritual reward of the Hereafter, or for praise and a reputation, or for something else. But (in reality), God, may He be glorified and exalted, gave it to thee. Without ulterior aim, He charged (the giver) with that belief and motivation so as to give it to thee. We have explained this concept in the chapter on Gratitude.¹⁷²⁹

THE THIRD REASON is that one loves a person who is a doer of good deeds, even if he has not done any good deed for him. Just as whoever hears that in Morocco, for example, there is a beneficent king, just and compassionate with his people, who keeps his treasury for the poor, not tolerating that anyone oppress (another) in his kingdom, one would necessarily love his nature, even though one knows that one will never see him, nor will one receive any good thing from him. For this reason, loving (anything) other than God Most High is (done) out of ignorance, for one's favors are from none other than from Him. Whoever does good deeds in the world does so at His prompting.

So, what and how many blessings are themselves in the hands of mankind? The favor is that He has created all created things and given to all whatever is needed, so that which is not needed also does not exist, but He also bestowed that in which one's ornament and adornment lie. One knows this when one contemplates the kingdom of the heavens, the earth, plants, and animals so that one see wonders and one sees favors and blessings without limit.

THE FOURTH REASON is that one loves a person for (his) beauty: that is, the beauty of his intrinsic good qualities, as one loves, for example, Imam Shafi'i (R) or another leader among the Muslim leaders. One loves 'Ali (R) and another loves Abu Bakr (R) and 'Umar (R). A third loves all of them; indeed, he loves all messengers, may the peace and blessings of God be upon them all. The reason for this is their good qualities and the attributes of their innate nature. This results when thou examinest three more things:

¹⁷²⁸ Chapter Six of this Pillar.

¹⁷²⁹ Chapter Six of this Pillar.

ONE is the beauty of knowledge, for knowledge and the learned are beloved because they are good and noble. To the extent that the knowledge is nobler and the known nobler, its beauty is that much greater. The noblest of all fields of learning is the spiritual knowledge of God Most High and the spiritual knowledge of the Divine Presence, which comprises the angels, the Books, the messengers, the laws of the prophets, the management of the dominion, and the kingdoms of the world and the Hereafter. The prophets and the truly righteous are beloved because they have perfection in these studies.

THE SECOND comes with power, such as their power over the improvement of their own selves and the improvement of the servants of God Most High, their governance, the keeping of the kingdom of this world in order, and the order of the true nature of religion.

THE THIRD comes with being superior to¹⁷³⁰ and pure from fault and blemish, and from malicious characteristics. What are loved in them are these qualities, not their deeds; for any act not (performed) because of these qualities is not praiseworthy, like the deed that is performed accidentally or negligently. Consequently, the love of whoever is more perfect in these qualities is greater. It is for this, for example, that (Abu Bakr) Siddiq (R) is more loved than Shafi'i, and the messengers more beloved than Siddiq.

Now, consider these three qualities to the end that God Most High is deserving of love and that He possesses these qualities. There is no simple-hearted person who does not know this much: that the knowledge of the ancients and the moderns among mankind and the angels is nothing beside the knowledge of God Most High. He has said it all: *And of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little.* (Q. 17:85) Moreover, if all the learned are gathered to learn the wonders of His wisdom and knowledge in the creation of an ant or a gnat completely, they would not be able to do so. This much they know, they know from Him that which He created in them, as He said: *He hath created man; He hath taught him utterance.* (Q. 55:3-4) And then all (man's) studies are finite, while His knowledge is infinite. What relationship does (man's knowledge) have with that? Man's knowledge is from Him. Thus, all knowledge is from Him and His knowledge is not from mankind.

And if thou considerest power, power, too, is beloved. For this reason the bravery of 'Ali (R) is loved, and the administration of justice by 'Umar (R) for that is a kind of power. But what is the power of all mankind when compared with the power of God? Rather, all are helpless except those to whom He has given power. Since He has made all incapable of this—for if a fly steals something from them, they cannot get it back—they are incapable. Therefore, infinite power belongs to Him

¹⁷³⁰ Or "inviolability" (*tanazzuh*): See Note 177 for a discussion of this concept.

Whose power is the cause of the heavens and the earth and every thing that is between them of jinn, man, animals, and plants. He is capable of (making) their like unendingly.

So, how is it permissible that one love (anyone) other than Him for reason of power? And when can a human being be perfect in the attribute of inviolability and freedom from defects? (Man's) first deficiency is that he is a servant and that he has no control over his own existence. On the contrary, he is created. What deficiency can there be greater than that? And then, he is ignorant of his own interior, not to mention other things! If one vein in his brain goes out of shape, he becomes mad and does not know the cause of that. Perhaps, the treatment has been placed in front of him, but he does not know that. When thou reckonest it up, how great is his helplessness and ignorance! His knowledge and power in that are limited, even if he is one of the Truly Righteous, even if he is a Messenger.

So then, He Whose knowledge is infinite is free from defects. The knowledge of God, may He be honored and glorified, is without limit. He is not affected by the turbidity of ignorance. His power is so perfect that the seven heavens and the earth are in the grasp of His power. If He were to destroy them all, no decrease would befall His greatness and sovereignty. Should He so desire, He is able to create a hundred thousand more worlds in an instant, (yet) there would be not an atom's increase to His greatness, for increase does not affect Him. He is free from defect. Non-existence does not affect His essence and His attributes. On the contrary, deficiency itself is impossible with respect to Him. Accordingly, it is the extreme limit of ignorance for anyone not to love Him, or to love another (in His stead). This love is more perfect than that which is because of (His) beneficence, for that (love) increases and decreases with the increase and decrease of blessings. When the reason is the former, one's love is at the state of perfection in all circumstances. Concerning this, revelation came to David (A): "O David, the most beloved of My servants is a person who worships Me not out of fear or avarice, but to discharge the duty due (My) Divinity." In the Psalms, it is written: "Who is more an oppressor than he who loves Me for the sake of heaven and hell? If I had not created heaven and hell, would I not have been worthy of devotion?"

THE FIFTH REASON is that in love there is a relationship. There is also a special relationship for man with God Most High, to which *Say: The spirit is by command of my Lord* (Q. 17:85) refers, and to which *verily, God created Adam in His image* refers; and that which He said: "My servant approaches Me so that I take him as a friend; then, I become his hearing, I become his sight, and I become his tongue." And that which He said: "*I became ill and thou didst not visit me, O Moses!*" (Moses) said: "Thou art the God of the Universe and immune to all

blights. How didst Thou become ill?" He said: "O Moses, such-and-such a servant of Mine was sick. If thou hadst visited him, thou wouldst have visited Me."

We have discussed the Tradition about the relationship of the form of Adam to the Divine Presence in the Prolegomena. Some explanations have been given, and other significations cannot be explained in books, for the understanding of the people would not have the strength to hear them. Indeed, many of the astute have stumbled in this. Some have fallen at resemblance, and have supposed that form is naught but the external form. Some have fallen at transmigration and union. Comprehending all of this is difficult. The point is that when thou hast learned the reasons for love, thou knowest that any love other than the love for God Most High is out of ignorance. For this reason, thou recognizest the simple-heartedness of that scholastic theologian who said: "One cannot love anything not of one's own kind. Since He is not of our kind, love for Him is impossible!"

Thus, the meaning of love is obedience, which that unfortunate fool did not understand, except as the carnal appetite by which one loves women. There is no doubt about the desire of that appetite for homogeneity. However, the love which we have discussed desires the beauty and perfection of spiritual qualities, not the homogeneity in the (physical) form. One who loves the Messenger does so not because, like him, (the Messenger) had a head, face, hands, and feet. Rather, he has a spiritual relationship, for he is like him in that he is living, learned, a disciple, a theologian, hearing, and seeing. These attributes are in perfection in (the Messenger). There is also a basis for this relationship, but the difference in perfection and attributes is limitless. Any remoteness and distance that arises from the increase of perfection increases the love, but it does not sever the root of the love, which is by virtue of the relationship. To this extent, every person acknowledges and recognizes a relationship, even though he does not come to know the secret and true nature of the relationship: that the "*verily God created Adam in His image*" of the Tradition is for that.

DISCLOSING THAT THERE IS NO PLEASURE LIKE THE PLEASURE OF SEEING GOD MOST HIGH

Know that this is the spoken belief of all Muslims, but if they ask this of themselves: "What is the pleasure of seeing something that has no dimension,¹⁷³¹ shape, or color?" they do not know (the answer). Nonetheless, they assert this with their tongues out of fear, because it has

¹⁷³¹ "dimension" (*jihat*): literally "direction, surface, side." Here it refers to occupying space, solidity.

come in Religious Doctrine. Yet, inside one, there is no longing. How can one have a longing for something one does not understand? However difficult it may be to study this mystery in such a book as this, we shall explain in a brief exposition.

Know that this is based upon four principles: First, that thou knowest that seeing God Most High is more pleasant. Second, that thou knowest that the spiritual knowledge of God Most High is more pleasant than all things other than He. Third, that thou know that the ease and pleasure of the soul is in spiritual insight and knowledge, without there being a share for the eye and body in that. Fourth, that thou knowest that the pleasure which is reserved to the soul is more powerful and stronger than any pleasure of the eye, ear, or the other senses. If thou knowest all these, it will necessarily become clear that it is not possible for anything to be more pleasurable than seeing God Most High.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE: That thou recognize that ease of the soul lies in spiritual knowledge, for in that, there is a non-physical pleasure.

Know that powers have been created in the human being: each one created for a purpose and in consistency with his nature. Its pleasure is consistent with his nature, just as the power of anger has been created for dominance and revenge and one's pleasure is in (doing) that. The power of the carnal appetite has been created for the obtaining of nourishment and one's pleasure is in (doing) that. Make an analogy of the faculties of hearing, sight, etc., in the same manner: each one has a pleasure and these pleasures are different. The pleasure of sexual intercourse is different from the pleasure of giving rein to one's anger. There are also differences in strength; some are stronger, as the pleasure of the eye from a fine image is more dominant than the pleasure of the nose in pleasant scents. A power has also been created in the human soul that is called "intelligence" and "illumination." It was created for the knowledge and spiritual insights that do not enter the imagination or the senses, and that is one's nature, too. One's pleasure in that is that by it one knows that this world has been created and it requires a wise and All-Powerful Planner Who always was. In the same way, one learns the attributes of the Maker and His wisdom in (His) creation.

All of this does not come in the senses and the imagination. Rather, one knows and deduces subtle works through this power, such as putting (in man) the root of speech, putting writing, and putting geometry and subtle fields of learning. There is pleasure for one in all of these, so that if one is praised for a little humble knowledge, one rejoices. If it is said that he does not know, he becomes hurt, for he considers his own knowledge perfect. Nay, if one sits with a chess player, he is told: "Give him no direction," and they make many rules that one does not have strength to endure. From the joy and pleasure in that meager amount of knowledge, one becomes impatient and wishes to boast of it. Knowledge

is a quality of God Most High: what thing is more pleasurable to a human being than its perfection? What perfection is there greater than a perfection that comes with the attributes of God Most High? Thus, with this principle, thou hast learned that there is a pleasure for the soul from spiritual knowledge, without the eye and body's having any part in it.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: That thou know that the soul's pleasure of knowledge and spiritual insight is stronger than the pleasure of things perceived by the senses and the pleasure of (satisfying) the carnal appetites.

Know that whenever a person plays chess and has not eaten all day long and is called to eat, he does not eat. He continues to play, so we know that his pleasure in winning at chess and improving (his game) is stronger than his pleasure in eating bread—because he prefers the former. As a result, we come to know the power of that pleasure because, when both are available, he chooses one (in preference to the other).

When thou hast learned this, know that the internal powers are more dominant in whoever is more intelligent. If one is left to choose freely between eating an almond confection with roast chicken and performing some deed in which an enemy will be overthrown and some office of command become procurable, he will choose command and victory (instead of the food)—unless his character has not been completely (formed), like that of a child; or (his internal powers) have died, as in an imbecile.

Therefore, for that person in whom both the appetite for food and the appetite for rank and command have been created, we know that the latter is stronger. It is the same for the scholar who studies the science of mathematics, or the science of geometry, or the science of Religious Law and Doctrine, or that in which he finds a pleasure—when it is not deficient and is perfect—he chooses that above all pleasures. Moreover, he will prefer that to command or governance, unless he is deficient in knowledge and has not received the complete pleasure of (knowledge).

So, from this it is clear that the pleasure of knowledge and spiritual insight is stronger than all other pleasures, but for the person who is not deficient and in whom both appetites have been created. For, even though a child will prefer the pleasure of playing with walnuts over the pleasure of sexual intercourse and the pleasure of command, we do not fall into doubt that this is a deficiency of his—that he does not have these appetites—because when both are provided, he will prefer them.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE: The spiritual knowledge of God Most High is more pleasurable than all other kinds of knowledge.

When thou hast learned that knowledge and spiritual insight are pleasurable, there is no doubt that some fields of knowledge are more

pleasurable (than others). For, however much that which is known is nobler and greater, its knowledge is more pleasurable. The knowledge of winning at chess is more pleasurable than the knowledge of playing chess and the knowledge of administering a kingdom is more pleasurable than the knowledge of viziership. And the knowledge of viziership is more pleasurable than the knowledge of tailoring and goldsmithery. The knowledge of the meanings of the Law and its mysteries, is more pleasurable than the knowledge of grammar and language, and knowing the secrets of the task of a minister in a ministry is more pleasurable than knowing the work of the people of the market place. Knowing the secrets of a ruler (yet) more pleasurable than knowing the secrets of a minister.

Therefore, behold! Is there any thing in existence nobler, greater, more perfect, and more majestic than the Lord of the Universe Who is the Creator of all perfections and all kinds of beauty? Is the management of any monarch in the keeping of his kingdom like His management of the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth and the ordering of the works of this world and the next world? Is there any presence finer and more perfect than the Divine Presence? Then, how is it possible that beholding some (human) presence could be more pleasurable than beholding that Presence—if a person has the eye to see that or has the intellect to know that—or knowing the secrets of a kingdom be more pleasurable than the secrets of that Kingdom?

Accordingly, it is apparent from this that the knowledge of God Most High, the knowledge of His attributes, the knowledge of His dominion and kingdom, and the knowledge of the mysteries of His Divinity are more pleasurable than all (other kinds) of knowledge, because the knowing of this knowledge is the most noble. Indeed, saying “noble” is a mistake and error; for other things, when thou ascribest them to Him, are no longer worthy of thy calling them “noble,” nor can it be said they are “more noble.” Thus, the knower in this world is always in a Paradise that is *a Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth* (Q. 3:133). Rather, more: for the breadth of the sky and the earth is finite, while knowledge is infinite. The garden that is the theater of the knower has no borders, while the heavens and the earth have borders. The fruit in that garden is not seasonal, nor is it beyond reach; rather, it is continuous and *the clusters are in easy reach*, (Q. 69:23) for what is closer than a thing that is from His essence? Hindrance, perfidy, and envy cannot affect that because however much more a person knows, intimacy is greater. Paradise is like that, so that multitudes of people are not crowded in it. Instead, it becomes more spacious.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE: That the pleasure of seeing is greater than the pleasure of knowing.

Know that that which is to be known is of two kinds: some are those which appear in the imagination, such as color and shape; and

some are those that one's intellect perceives and do not occur in the imagination, such as God Most High and His attributes. Indeed, some are themselves of thine own attributes, such as power, knowledge, desire, and life. For these, there is no question of how-ness and it does not come to the imagination. As for anger, passionate love, pain, and ease; there is no how-ness for all of these and they do not come to the imagination, but the intellect perceives them all.

Thy perception of everything that appears in the imagination is at two levels: One is that it presents itself in the imagination, as thou sayest: "Look at it." This is deficient. The other is that thou sayest that it appears in the eye; that is more perfect. Certainly, the pleasure of seeing the beloved is greater than the pleasure of imagining (the beloved), not because an image seen (with the eye) is different from or finer than (an image in the imagination); rather, it is the same, but it is brighter, as when thou seest the beloved at the time of mid-morning, thou findest a greater pleasure than at sunrise. It is not because the form changes; rather, it is because it is brighter and more disclosed.

In the same manner, whatever does not appear in the imagination, while the intellect perceives it, has two levels: one is called "spiritual knowledge." Beyond it, is another level called "vision" or "spiritual witnessing."¹⁷³² The relation of the latter to knowledge in the perfection of illumination is like that of (ocular) sight to the imagination. As, for example, the eyelid is the veil of the eye—but not the imagination—so that until it lifts, there is no sight, so is the connection of a human being to (his physical) body that is a vehicle (made) of water and dust. His involvement with the appetites of this world is a veil (obstructing) spiritual witnessing, not spiritual knowledge. So long as this veil is not raised, spiritual witnessing does not become possible. About this, He said to Moses (A): *Thou shalt not see Me!* (Q. 7:143) Consequently, since spiritual witnessing is more total and more luminous, the pleasure is necessarily greater, just as with ocular sight, (as opposed to) the imagination.

Know that the true nature of that is that it is the same spiritual knowledge (of this world) that takes on a different character in the next world to which it has no close (resemblance). (It is like) the drop which becomes a man and the date stone which becomes a tree and reach perfection; then, this change becomes extremely clear. This is called "witnessing," "looking," and "seeing." Seeing is the metaphor of the perfection of perception, while spiritual witnessing is the perfection of this perception. This is because spiritual witnessing does not require

¹⁷³² The spiritual witnessing (*mushāhadah*) referred to here is the highest degree of perfection in contemplating the Divine Essence. The "spiritual knowledge" in the previous sentence is called *ma'rifat*.

dimension.¹⁷³³ just as the knowledge of this world does not require dimension.

Consequently, the seed of seeing is spiritual knowledge. Whoever does not possess spiritual knowledge is deprived of sight by an everlasting veil. For, whoever does not have the seed, planting is inconceivable. Whoever's knowledge is more complete, (his) seeing is more complete. So, do not suppose that all people are equal in seeing. Rather, each one has sight according to the amount of his knowledge. This is (the saying:) "*Verily, God is manifest to the people generally and to Abu Bakr especially.*" Not that he sees by himself and others see together; rather, he sees Him and others themselves do not see, for that was special for him. The seed was a spiritual insight that the others did not have. That which he (S) said: "The excellence of Abu Bakr (R) is not in many formal prayers and (in much) fasting. Rather, it is in the secret which is established in his soul." That secret is a kind of spiritual knowledge, and it is the seed of the seeing that will especial to him.

So, the difference of the seeing of the people, notwithstanding that God Most High is One, is like the difference among (reflected) images of a single form that appear in various mirrors. Some are small and some are large; some are brighter and some are darker; some are distorted and some are straight, so that perhaps the distortion reaches the point that the beautiful appears ugly, such as the (reflected) images on the length and breadth of sword. Though (the original) is beautiful, it (appears) unpleasant and loathsome.¹⁷³⁴ Whoever carries the mirror of his soul to that world, while it is dark or distorted—that which is the comfort of others—the exact same thing will become the causes of his sorrow.

Therefore, do not suppose that others receive that pleasure from seeing that the messengers of God receive, or that the common folk receive that (same pleasure) which the learned receive, or that other scholars receive that (same pleasure) which the pious and loving scholars receive. The difference between the knower who is dominated by the love for God Most High and the knower who is not so dominated lies in the pleasure, not in the seeing. Both see One, which is the seed of spiritual knowledge. The seed for both is equal. But their similitude is that of two persons whose ocular vision is equal and they see beauty. If one is more in love, his pleasure is greater. Consequently, knowledge of the perfection of happiness is not sufficient so long as there is no love for that. Love for that triumphs when the love for the world is cleansed from his soul. This cannot be accomplished except with asceticism and piety. Thus, the pleasure of the ascetic knower is more perfect.

¹⁷³³ See Note 1731 above.

¹⁷³⁴ The modern reader should remember that in the Middle Ages there was not much assembly-line production of goods. Mirrors were fashioned individually and rarely reflected exactly alike, hence Ghazzali's metaphor.

EXCURSUS: [THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PLEASURE OF THE SEEING
AND THE PLEASURE OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE]

Certainly, thou mayst say: "If the pleasure of seeing is of the nature of the pleasure of spiritual knowledge, this is not so pleasurable." Thou sayest this because thou thyself hast no awareness of the pleasure of spiritual knowledge, but it may be that thou hast learned some words thrown together from a book or learned from someone, and thou hast labeled that "spiritual knowledge"—from which thou wilt in no manner obtain pleasure; as a person who calls pot-herbs¹⁷³⁵ a confection of almond¹⁷³⁶ and eats it. He does not get the pleasure of the almonds. However, one who tastes the real nature of spiritual knowledge finds such pleasure in it that if Paradise were shown to him in this world, he would prefer that (spiritual knowledge) to Paradise, just as the intelligent person will prefer the pleasure of sovereignty to the pleasures of the genitalia and the belly.

On the other hand, even though the pleasure of spiritual knowledge is tremendous, yet it does not approach the pleasure of the seeing of the Hereafter. This cannot be made clear to the understanding except with a parable: Postulate a lover who gazes at his beloved at dawn, when it has not yet become light, at a time when his love is weak and his carnal appetite lacking, and there are a scorpion and a bee in his clothing. They sting him and, with that, distract his soul from other affairs. He is alarmed at everything. There is no doubt that his pleasure is weak. Then, suddenly the sun rises and (the day) becomes brilliantly luminous. His carnal appetite and his love become overpowering and the matter of the scorpion and the bee becomes remote. His alarm leaves him. He derives a great pleasure in the sight of (his) beloved, far beyond that which he felt before.

The state of the knower in the world is like that. The darkness is an allegory of the weakness of spiritual knowledge in this world which, so to say, he looks at from behind a curtain. The weakness of love is due to (his) human deficiency that will be deficient until he is in the next world, and he does not achieve perfection in love. The scorpion and the bee represent the carnal appetites of this world and are grief and sorrow and the different kinds of affliction that exist. All of these muddle the pleasure of spiritual knowledge. Pre-occupation and alarm represent the cares of life, livelihood, obtaining food, and the like. All of these depart at death. The appetite and love for seeing are not finished except when the grief, sorrow, and preoccupations of this world are cut off. For this reason, that pleasure may achieve the extreme of perfection, even though

¹⁷³⁵ "pot-herbs" (*tarinah*): a dish eaten by the poor.

¹⁷³⁶ "a confection of almonds" (*lawzinah*): a delicacy.

it is not more than the extent of the spiritual knowledge. Just as the pleasure the hungry receive from the smell of food has no relationship to the pleasure of eating, the pleasure of spiritual knowledge to sight is the same.

EXCURSUS [THE EYE OF THE HEREAFTER IS NOT
LIKE THE EYE OF THE WORLD]

Certainly, thou mayst say: "Spiritual knowledge is in the soul and sight is in the eye; how is this possible?" Know that the sight is called "sight" because it is the achievement of the perfection of the imagination, not because it is in the eye. For, if He had created the eye in the forehead, it would still be an eye. Therefore, becoming mired (in the question) about its location is presumption. Rather, since the word "sight" has been mentioned, and outwardly, it is of the (physical) eye, thou must believe that in the Hereafter the eye has some part. Thou shouldst know that the eye of the Hereafter is not like the eye of this world, for the eye (of this world) does not see anything but the surface, but the eye (of the Hereafter) sees without surfaces. More than this, it is not permissible for one to say or discourse upon to an unlettered person, for it itself is not within his power (to comprehend). Carpentry is not the work of an ape. Every scholar who has taken pains in the study of religious jurisprudence, the Traditions, and (Quranic) commentary is also unlettered in this sense, and neither is it his task. Indeed, he who has also toiled in scholastic theology is also unlettered concerning the true nature of this, for the scholastic theologian is the provost and the escort of the belief of the unlettered. He preserves whatever the unlettered person has come to believe by (means of citing) relevant Traditions. (The scholastic theologian) wards off the evil of heresy from him and knows the way of disputation.

However spiritual knowledge itself, so to say, is something else, and its folk are of another kind. Since this discussion is not suitable for such a book as this, it is better than we confine ourselves to this.

EXCURSUS: [HOW ONE MAY OBTAIN THE PLEASURE OF
SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE AND THE LOVE FOR GOD]

Certainly, thou mayst say: "A pleasure in which the pleasure of Paradise is forgotten will never be conceivable by me." No matter how much has been said about this concept, what is the plan, so that if one does not have that pleasure, one at least may secure belief in it? This is treated by four things:

ONE is that thou reflect upon what has been said above and think about it much, until it becomes clear that (just) by hearing words one time, they do not enter the soul.

THE SECOND is that thou know that human characteristics in appetite and pleasure were not created at one time. Rather, the first appetite of a child is for eating and he knows nothing other than that. When he approaches his seventh year, the appetite for play appears in him, so that he passes up food and goes to play. When he is about ten years old, the appetite for adornment and fine clothing appears in him so that he leaves play in the desire of clothes. When he is fifteen, the pleasure of the carnal appetite and intercourse with women appears in him, so that he places all his desires in seeking that. When he is about twenty years old, the pleasure of governance, dominion, boasting, competition, and seeking advancement in rank appears in him. This is the end of the degrees of pleasures in the world, as God Most High said in the Quran: *Verily the life of this world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children.* (Q. 57:20)

Then, when he has passed through these, if the world has not completely ruined his inner (self) and has not made his soul diseased, the pleasure of the spiritual knowledge of the universe and the Creator of the universe, the mysteries of the dominion and the kingdom of heaven appear in him, so that whatever is of the past is trivial in comparison with that. All of that, too, becomes trivial in comparison with (new knowledge). The pleasure of heaven is no more than the pleasure of the belly, the genitalia, and the eye: for one continuously looks at a garden, eats food, and gazes at greenery, flowing water, and decorated palaces. This is the same carnal appetite that is also in this world and that becomes humble and trivial beside the appetite for governance, conquest, and giving orders, not to mention spiritual knowledge. There is the monk who has imprisoned himself in a monastery and eats no more than the quantity of a pea every day in the greed for rank, acceptance, and their pleasure. Therefore, he loves the pleasure of rank more than heaven, for heaven is nothing more than the pleasures of the genitals, the belly, and the eye.

So, the pleasure of rank that trivializes all (other) appetites is overwhelmed by the pleasure of spiritual knowledge. Thou hast faith in all of this as thou hast achieved it all, while a child who has not attained (such) rank does not have faith in it. If thou desirest to explain the pleasure of governance to him, thou wilt not be able to do so. In the same way, the spiritually insightful knower at thy hands is as helpless and distressed, because of thy blindness, as thou art at the hands of the child. But, if thou hast a little bit of intelligence and reflect, this will not remain hidden (from thee).

THE THIRD REMEDY is that thou study the states of the knowers and listen to their words; for the eunuch or the impotent, even if he does not know the pleasure of the passion of sexual intercourse, he sees men

spend all they have for that and rush out in the search for it. He will certainly gain some knowledge that there is a passion and pleasure for them which is beyond that which there is for him.

Rabi'ah was a woman who was told about heaven. She said: "*The neighbor; then, the house.*" First, the master of the house; then, the house. Abu Sulayman Darani says: "There are servants of God Most High who are not distracted from God Most High by fear of hell and the hope of heaven. How can the world occupy them?"

One of the friends of Ma'ruf Karkhi said to him: "Tell me what it is that has made thee so disgusted with mankind and the world, and has made (thee) occupy thyself with seclusion and worship? Is it the fear of death, the fear of the grave, the fear of hell, or the hope of heaven?" He replied: "What are all these? There is a King who has all these. If thou tastest His friendship, thou wilt forget all these. If some knowledge and acquaintance appears to thee with Him, thou wilt disdain all of them."

Bishr Hafi was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What is the state of Abu Nasr Tammar¹⁷³⁷ and 'Abd al-Wahhab Warraq?"¹⁷³⁸ He answered: "I left them in Paradise at this time, eating the food of Paradise." He was asked: "And what about thee?" He replied: "God Most High knew that I had no desire for food and drink. He favored me with the sight of Himself."

'Ali bin al-Muwaffaq says: "I saw heaven in a dream and many people were eating food; angels were placing choice morsels in their mouths. I saw one in front of Paradise staring, his eye bulging, stupefied. I asked Ridwan:¹⁷³⁹ 'Who is he?' He answered: 'Ma'ruf Karkhi, whose worship was neither out of the fear of hell, nor in the hope of Paradise. (God) has made it lawful for him to look.'" Abu Sulayman Darani says: "Whoever is occupied with himself today, tomorrow it will be the same. Whoever is occupied with his Lord today, tomorrow it will be same."

Yahya bin Mu'adh says: "One night, I saw Bayazid sitting on two feet from the evening obligatory formal prayer until morning, his heels lifted, and his eyes starting from his head in astonishment. Finally, he prostrated himself and (then) stood for a long time, his head raised, and said: 'O Lord God, some have sought Thee. Thou hast favored them so that they walked on water and flew in the air. I seek refuge with Thee from those things. And Thou hast given some the treasures of the earth. Thou hast given some to travel a vast distance in one night and they were made happy by that. I seek refuge with Thee from all of that.' Then he

¹⁷³⁷ Abū Naṣr Tammār: 'Abd al-Malik bin 'Abd al-'Azīz, a noted ascetic. He died AH228/842-3CE. Qushayri also mentions him.

¹⁷³⁸ 'Abd al-Wahhāb Warrāq: No other information about him from available standard sources at present. An 'Abd al-Wahhāb is mentioned by Qushayri. Warrāq, if that was his trade, means copyist or someone working with paper.

¹⁷³⁹ Ridwān: the name of the porter or gardener of Paradise.

turned and saw me. He said: 'O Yahya, art thou here?' I said: 'Yes.' He asked: 'How long then?' I said: 'A long time.' Then I said: 'Tell me something of those states.' He said: 'I shall tell thee what is suitable for thee. I was shown around the highest kingdom of Heaven and the lowest kingdom. A cry came: "Ask for anything thou desirest of all these so that I may give it to thee." I said: "I desire nothing from all of these." He said: "Thou art indeed My servant!"'

Abu Turab Nakhashbi¹⁷⁴⁰ had a disciple deeply immersed in his own affair. Once, Abu Turab said to him: "If thou seest Bayazid, it is permissible." He said: "I am (too) busy for Bayazid." Then, (Abu Turab) said that several times. The disciple said: "I see the Lord of Bayazid; what have I to do with Bayazid?" Abu Turab said: "If thou seest Bayazid one time, it will be better than thy seeing the Lord of Bayazid seventy times." The disciple became dumbfounded and asked: "How?" (Abu Turab) replied: "O helpless one! Thou seest God with thee: He appears according to thy capacity. But thou wilt see Bayazid with God Most High according to his capacity." The disciple understood and said: "Let us go." (Abu Turab) said: "We went to him. He was sitting in a thicket. We went up a rise in the ground and waited for him to come out. He was wearing a fur cloak turned inside out. The disciple looked at him, cried out, and fell dead. I said: "O Bayazid! One glance and that fatal!" He said: "No, the disciple was truthful and there was an inner secret in him that would not be revealed with his strength. When he saw us, it was suddenly revealed. He was weak and could not endure it and he perished."

And Bayazid said: "If He were to give thee the Friendship of Abraham, the Conversation of Moses, and Spirituality of Jesus, do not turn back from Him, for He has works beyond those." Bayazid had a friend, a purifier.¹⁷⁴¹ He said to (Bayazid): "It has been thirty years that I perform formal prayer at night and fast by day, but nothing of that which thou speakest has yet appeared to me." (Bayazid) said: "Thou art veiled by thyself." (The purifier) asked: "What is the remedy?" (Bayazid) answered: "Thou wilt not be able to do it." (The purifier) said: "Tell me so that I may do it." (Bayazid) said: "Thou wilt not do it." (The purifier) said: "Please tell me." (Bayazid) said: "Right now go to the barber and tell him to shave off thy beard and mustache. Become naked and bind a loincloth about thy waist and hang a bag full of walnuts about thy neck. Cry out in the market: 'I shall give a walnut to any child who slaps me on

¹⁷⁴⁰ Abū Turāb Nakhashbī: 'Askar bin al-Husayn (Hasin?) al-Nakhshabi. One of the more important of the shaykhs of Khorasan and an inveterate traveler. He used to cross deserts disregarding everything. He died in the desert near Basrah AH245/859-60CE. (Hujwiri; Qushayri)

¹⁷⁴¹ "a purifier" (*muzakki*): one who purifies his possessions by consecrating a part thereof to pious uses. (S)

the neck.' In the same manner, go before the judge and the purifiers of the city.'" The man cried: "Glory be to God! What is this that thou art saying?" Bayazid replied: "Thou hast denied the Oneness of God by saying 'Glory be to God!' because thou saidst it out of self-magnification." (The purifier) said: "Tell me something else, for I cannot do that." (Bayazid) said: "Thy first remedy is that." (The purifier) said: "I cannot do that." (Bayazid) said: "I told thee myself that thou couldst not do it." And he said this because the man was occupied with himself, (his) pride, and the seeking of rank. He had been conquered (by them) and that would have been his treatment.

In the Traditions, it is related that revelation came to Jesus (A): "When I look into the soul of a servant (of God) and see neither the world nor the Hereafter, I place My love there and I am the Superintendent of his preservation." Ibrahim Adham said: "O Lord God, Thou knowest that heaven in my view is not worth a mosquito wing beside Thy love that Thou hast bestowed upon me and the intimacy that Thou hast given me with Thy remembrance." Rabi'ah was asked: "How dost thou love the Messenger (S)?" She answered: "Strongly, but love for the Creator has diverted me from love for the created." Jesus (A) was asked: "Of deeds, which is preferred?" He answered: "The love for God Most High and approving of what He does."

In short, there are many such Traditions and stories. In the context of the states of these people, it necessarily becomes clear that the pleasure of spiritual knowledge and His love is greater than the pleasure of Paradise. Thou must think well about that.

DISCLOSING THE CAUSE OF THE CONCEALMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD MOST HIGH

Know that discerning a thing becomes impossible for two reasons: one is that it is hidden and not clear; the other is that its extremely bright and the eye does not have the strength to endure it. It is for this reason that a bat cannot see during the day, but sees at night; not because things are clearer at night, but because by day they are so very bright, while its eye is weak. So, the difficulty of the knowledge of God Most High is its brilliance, for it is so manifest that souls do not have the strength to perceive it. Thou comest to know the luminosity and appearance of God Most High when thou makest an analogy: If thou see a written line or stitched clothing, there is nothing more plain to thee than the power, knowledge, life, and desire of the scribe, or the tailor who stitched (the garment). By his work, his internal attributes become so clear that knowledge (of them) is necessarily acquired.

If, in all the universe, God Most High had not created more than a single bird or had not created more than a single plant, whoever looked at it would necessarily discern the perfection of its Maker's power.

knowledge, majesty, and greatness; for the evidence of these are more obvious than the evidence of the scribe. But, when all that is in existence of heaven and earth, animals and plants, and stones and clods of earth—indeed, everything He has created or one can fancy of one can imagine—all are of one character in that they testify to the beauty and majesty of (their) Maker. He has become concealed by the sheer multiplicity of signs and (the magnitude of their) brilliance. If some of His works were (bright) and others were not, then He would have been manifest; but since all have become of the same nature, He is hidden.

The parable of this is that there is nothing more brilliant than the sun by which all things are made manifest. But, if the sun were not to set at night or did not become hidden by shade, no one would know that there is a light, for example, on the face of the earth. They would not have seen anything other than white, green, and colors. They would say that there is nothing more than this. Therefore that which is known, that there is a thing (called) light beyond the colors and by which the colors are revealed, (is known) because the colors have been obscured by the night and are more obscure in the shade than in the sunlight. As a result, they have learned (of the sun's existence) from its contrary.

In the same way, if absence or annihilation were possible for the Creator, the heavens and the earth would all collapse upon each other and become non-existent. Then, He would necessarily have been known! However, since all things are of one character in testifying (to the Creator), and this witnessing is continuous and most luminous, (He) is therefore concealed by that luminosity.

Too, as this is established in the eye during childhood, when one's intellect is not mature enough to hear their witnessing. When one has become accustomed to and familiar with them, thereafter one is not aware of their witnessing, except when one sees a strange animal or a strange plant. Then, one's unawareness leaps from one's tongue: "Glory be to God!" for the witnessing has given awareness to one's soul.

Therefore, the eye of anyone who is not weak sees all that he sees as being of His handiwork, not the thing itself. He does not see the heavens and the earth; rather, he sees them from (their) aspect of being His handiwork; just as a person sees some writing does not see it not from the aspect of its being ink and paper—a person who sees it thus does not know how to write. Instead, he sees it as ordered lines so that he sees the writer in them. As in a compilation, he sees the compiler, not the lines. When it is thus, he sees God Most High in all that he looks upon, for there is no thing that is not of His making. Indeed, the entire universe is His compilation and handiwork. If thou wishest to look upon something that is neither of His (work) nor His, thou wilt not be able to. For, everything gives testimony of the perfection of His power, majesty, and greatness in an eloquent language, that which is called the language

of signs. There is nothing brighter in the universe, but the inability of mankind to (perceive) this is due to their own weakness.

DISCLOSING THE REMEDY FOR (ACHIEVING) LOVE

Know that since love is the greatest of the stations, becoming acquainted with the remedy for achieving¹⁷⁴² that is important. For, whoever desires to become a lover of goodness, the first step is that he turn away from all things except (the beloved). Then, he continuously looks upon (the beloved). When he sees (only the beloved's) face, but the hands, feet, and hair are concealed—and that is also good—he strives to see (the rest) also, so that every beauty he sees will increase his inclination. If he is persevering, the inclination will appear in him, small or great.

Then, the love for God Most High is also thus. The first condition is that one turn one's face away from the world and cleanse one's soul from loving it, for the love for other than God Most High will distract (one) from the love for Him. This is like cleaning the ground of thorns and weeds. Then, one seeks the spiritual knowledge of Him; for, the cause of anyone's not loving Him is that he has not come to know Him. If that (were) not so, (His) beauty and perfection would naturally be beloved. When a person comes to know (Abu Bakr) Siddiq and ('Umar) Faruq, he cannot not love them. Their virtues and laudable acts naturally (inspire) love. Obtaining spiritual knowledge is like putting a seed in the soil. Then, one continually occupies oneself in remembrance (of God) and meditation. This is like watering (the seed), for whoever remembers a person much, will certainly find an intimacy with him.

Know that no believer is devoid of the principle of love, but there are disparities in this for three reasons: One is that they differ in love and in being occupied with the world, and one love—whatever it may be—is detrimental to another love. Next, there are differences in knowledge. One of the common folk, for example, loves Shafī'i (R) because, in short, he considers him a great scholar. But the jurispudent who is aware of the details of some of his studies, loves him more, for he knows him better. Muzani,¹⁷⁴³ who was his student, and who knows of all of his studies, states, and character traits, loves him more than other jurisprudents. Therefore, whoever has come to God Most High better, loves Him more. Another is that there are differences in the remembrance and worship with which intimacy is achieved.

¹⁷⁴² "the remedy for achieving": Ghazzali uses the word *'ilāj* which usually refers to medical remedies, cures, and treatments; that is, for overcoming a disease or imperfection. Here, however, he is referring to the method for attaining some desirable end (the station of love) rather than a method to correct something undesirable.

¹⁷⁴³ Muzani: Abū Ibrāhīm Ismā'īl bin Ibrāhīm; died AH264/877-8CE.

Thus, the disparities of love arise from three causes. However, as for one who does not love (God) at all, it is because he does not know Him at all. Just as the beauty of the external form is naturally loved, the beauty of the internal form is the same. Consequently, love is the fruit of spiritual knowledge, and the perfection of spiritual knowledge is obtained in two ways:

ONE is the way of the Sufis, who are the chaste of the age and who are involved in earnest striving, keeping (themselves) internally pure through the continual remembrance (of God), so that one forgets one's self and all save God. Then, internally, effects begin to appear by which the greatness of God Most High becomes manifest and becomes like witnessing. The simile of this is spreading a net: perhaps, some prey may fall into it and perhaps not. Perhaps, a mouse will be caught, perhaps a hawk. There is a great difference in this and it is according to felicity and fortune.

THE OTHER method is by learning the lore of spiritual knowledge, not scholastic theology and other sciences. The first step is meditation upon the wonders of (His) handiwork, about which we have made some observations in the chapter on Meditation.¹⁷⁴⁴ Then, one progresses from this to meditation upon the majesty and beauty of the Essence, so that the true natures of the Names and the Attributes become disclosed to him. This is a lengthy study, but it is possible for the clever one to attain (his goal), if he finds a knowing master. However, the slow-witted will not achieve it: This is not like the dropping of a net, for it may be that prey fall in it and it may be that it does not. Instead, this is like agriculture, business, and earning a livelihood. It is as though a person gets hold of some sheep, male and female, so they may propagate progeny. Certainly, the property will increase, unless it is destroyed by lightning.

Whoever seeks love other than by the way of spiritual knowledge seeks the impossible. Whoever seeks spiritual knowledge other than by the two methods that have been discussed will not obtain it. Whoever supposes that he will achieve the (spiritual) happiness of the Hereafter without love for God Most High, supposes erroneously, for the happiness of the Hereafter is nothing more than thy reaching God Most High. And whoever attains something—if he had loved it before, but because of hindrances was prevented from that and has spent time in the enthusiasm for that thing—when he attains it and the hindrances are lifted, he falls into great pleasure. (Spiritual) happiness is this. If he does

¹⁷⁴⁴ Chapter Seven of this Pillar.

not love Him, he finds no pleasure. If he loves Him a little, he receives a little pleasure. Therefore, (spiritual) happiness and pleasure are commensurate with passion and love.

And if, *God forbid*, one has not done that within oneself, so that one has become acquainted with something which is His opposite, and has taken that as an intimate and a relation; that which will appear in the Hereafter will oppose him. That will be his ruin and he will fall into grief and pain. The very same things by which others become happy will make him miserable. He is like the sweeper who went to the market of the perfumers and some of those fine fragrances reached his nose. He fell down in a faint. The people came and sprinkled his face with rose water and musk. He became worse, until someone, who was there at the time the man would do his sweeping, arrived on the scene. He knew why the man had fallen unconscious. He brought some human filth and put it by the man's nose. He came to and exclaimed: "Akh! There is a sweet smell!"

Thus, whoever has become habituated to the pleasures of this world, so that it is become his beloved, is like that sweeper; just as he finds nothing in the market of the perfumers. Rather, all that is there is contrary to his nature and his grief is increased by it. He does not find the filth with which he had become familiar. In the Hereafter, too, he¹⁷⁴⁵ will find nothing. All of everything there will be in opposition to his nature. As a result, all will become the cause of his sorrow and hardship.

So, the Hereafter is the world of souls and the world of the beauty of the Divine Presence. Fortunate is the person whose nature has been given here a relationship to that, so that it is agreeable to his nature. All ascetic practices, acts of worship, and spiritual insights are for the sake of this relationship. Love itself is the essence of this relationship. *And he is indeed successful who causeth it to grow* (Q. 91:9) is this. All sins, carnal appetites, and all kinds of love for the world are the contrary of this relationship. *And he is indeed a failure who stunteth it* (Q. 91:10) is this. The perspicacious in the witnessing of these sublime realities have passed beyond the boundary of imitation. They have recognized this from the truthfulness of a messenger. Indeed, they have recognized the truthfulness of a miracleless messenger¹⁷⁴⁶ necessarily in this (way). Just as a person knows medicine, when he hears the speech of physician, he will necessarily recognize him as a physician. When he hears the speech of a doctor of the market place, he knows that (the man) is ignorant.¹⁷⁴⁷ Therefore, one necessarily distinguishes a (true) prophet

¹⁷⁴⁵ "he": Ghazzali is returning to the person who loves the contrary of God.

¹⁷⁴⁶ The Prophet did not claim to be a miracle worker.

¹⁷⁴⁷ Both the physician (*tabīb*) and the doctor (*ḥakīm*) practice medicine, but the *tabīb* is supposed to have studied medicine (*tibb*) formally, while the *ḥakīm* is often of a lower

from a lying false prophet in the same way. This is a self-evident knowledge, not like the knowledge that results in the turning of a staff into a dragon. That knowledge is in danger of being nullified should a calf moo! Distinguishing miracle from magic is not that easy.

THE SIGNS OF LOVE

Know that love is valuable jewel.¹⁷⁴⁸ Claiming love is easy, so that a person may think that he is one of the lovers, but there are signs and proofs of love. One must seek the signs in oneself, and they are seven:

THE FIRST (SIGN) is that there is no loathing for death, for no friend dislikes the sight of the Friend. The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever loves the sight of God Most High, God Most High loves the sight of him, too." Buwayti¹⁷⁴⁹ said to one of the ascetics: "Dost thou love death?" The ascetic hesitated in replying. (Buwayti) said: "If thou wert truthful, thou wouldst love it." However, it is permissible that there be love and loathing at the hastening of death—(but) not at the principle of death—so that one who has not yet prepared his provisions (for the Hereafter) may make (them). The sign of this is that one is impatient in preparing the provisions.

THE SECOND SIGN is that one prefers that which is loved by God Most High to that which is loved by him. He does not neglect anything he knows may be the cause of his proximity to the Beloved. He avoids all that causes his distancing (himself) from that. This is a person who loves God Most High with all his soul. As the Messenger (S) said: "Say to whoever wishes to see a person who loves God with all his heart: 'Look at Salim, the client'¹⁷⁵⁰ of Hudhayfah."

Moreover, if a person commits a sin, it does not follow that he is not a lover (of God). Instead, his love is not with his whole heart. The evidence of this is that Nu'ayman¹⁷⁵¹ was punished several times for drinking wine. Someone cursed him in the presence of the Messenger (S). The Messenger (S) said: "Curse him not, for he loves God Most High and His Messenger." Fudayl said: "When thou art asked if thou lovest God, remain silent. If thou sayest 'no,' thou becomest an

order of training and sometimes what we would call a "quack." The distinction I have made in this passage is for clarity: Persian usage is often looser than this.

¹⁷⁴⁸ "jewel" (*gawhar*): *Gawhar* may also mean "essence, substance."

¹⁷⁴⁹ Buwayti: Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf bin Yahyā al-Buwaytī, an important disciple of al-Shāfi'i (see Note 401). He died in prison AH231-2/846CE for refusing to declare the Quran created.

¹⁷⁵⁰ "client" (*mawlā*): See Note 24 to Book Two.

¹⁷⁵¹ Nu'ayman: Nu'aymān Ansārī, see Note 1127.

unbeliever. If thou sayest 'yes,' thy behavior does not resemble the acts of the lovers (of God)."

THE THIRD SIGN is that one always renews the remembrance of God Most High in one's soul and is eager to do that without taking pains; for whoever loves a thing remembers it frequently. If the love is complete, one never forgets (the object of love) itself. Yet, if one must force the heart to remember, it is feared that his beloved is that His remembrance dominate his soul. Consequently, it may be that the love for God Most High is not dominant, but the love for the love of Him dominates him who desires to love. Love is one thing and the love of love is another.¹⁷⁵²

THE FOURTH SIGN is that one loves the Quran, which is His Word, and the Messenger, (S) and all that is established by Him. When the love has become strong, one loves all mankind, for all are His servants. Indeed, one loves all extant things, for all are His creation, just as one who loves someone loves his composition and writing.

THE FIFTH SIGN is that one is avid for conversation (with God) in private and desirous for the coming of night. Crowds and hindrances depart and one holds conversation with the Friend in private. If one prefers sleep and idle chatter to solitude during the night and the day, one's love is weak. Revelation came to David (A): "O David, become the intimate of no one among mankind. No one is cut off from Me save two persons: one is he who hastens in the search for spiritual reward. When it comes late to him, he becomes languid. The other is he who forgets Me and is satisfied with his own condition. The sign of that is that I leave him alone and I keep him bewildered in the world."

Therefore, if love is total, affection for nothing else remains. There was a worshipper among the Children of Israel who would perform formal prayer at night. He would take his praying to beneath a tree where a bird with a sweet voice would sing. Revelation came to the messenger of the era: "Tell him: 'Thou hast become accustomed to seclusion. Thy degree has fallen because thou are not attending to anything of that.'"

Some have achieved such a degree in their conversations (with God) that fire has broken out in the other side of the dwelling and they did not become aware of it! The foot of one of them was cut during (his) formal prayer on some pretext, and he was unaware of it. Revelation came to David (A): "A person who claimed to love Me lied and slept all night. Does the friend not desire the sight of the Friend? Whoever seeks me, I am with him." Moses (A) said: "O Lord God, where art Thou that I may seek Thee?" He answered: "Whenever thou hast intended to seek (Me), thou hast found (Me)."

¹⁷⁵² That is, the act of remembering God becomes one's object rather than God Himself.

THE SIXTH SIGN is that worship becomes easy for one and its burdensomeness falls away. Someone says: "For twenty years I forced myself strenuously to perform the night formal prayer. Afterwards, I have taken delight in that for twenty years." When love becomes strong, no pleasure equals the pleasure of worship. How can it itself be difficult?

THE SEVENTH SIGN is that one loves all of His devout servants and one is merciful and compassionate to them, and one holds all unbelievers and rebels (against God) in enmity. As He said: *(They are) hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.* (Q. 48:29) One of the prophets asked: "O Lord God, who are Thy saints and friends?" He answered: "Those who are captivated with Me, like small children are captivated with their mothers. And just as a bird takes refuge in its nest, they take refuge with the remembrance of Me. Just as a leopard becomes enraged and fears nothing, they become enraged when a person commits a sin."

These and signs like these are many. They are present in him whose love is complete. The love of him who has some of them in him is in accordance with that (amount).

DISCLOSING THE MEANING OF THE LONGING FOR GOD MOST HIGH

Know that whoever denies love also denies longing. In a supplication of the Messenger (S), there is: *I beseech Thee for the longing for meeting Thee and the pleasure of gazing upon Thy Noble Countenance.* And he said: "God says: *Long has become the yearning of the god-fearing to meet Me and I yearn more strongly to meet them.*"¹⁷⁵³

So, thou must recognize the meaning of longing, what longing for God Most High is, for there is no love without longing. But, one by whom this is not recognized at all, has no longing. If it is recognized, is present, and is seen; it is also not longing. Therefore, longing is for something that is present in one respect and absent in another, like the beloved who is present in the imagination, but absent from the eye. The meaning of longing is "request" and "seeking" for that to become present in the eye so that perception may become complete. Then, from this thou comest to know that it is not possible for the longing for God Most High to be fulfilled in this world. It is present in spiritual knowledge, but absent from witnessing. Witnessing is the perfection of spiritual knowledge, just as seeing is the perfection of the imagination. This longing will not depart save with death. However, another kind of longing will remain that will not depart in the Hereafter either.

The deficiency of perception in this world has two aspects: One is that spiritual knowledge is a perception, resembling seeing from

¹⁷⁵³ Ghazzali follows the Arabic with a Persian translation omitted here.

behind a curtain, or seeing at the time of the first light, before the sun has risen. This will become clear in the Hereafter, and this longing will be cut off. The other is that a person has a beloved whose face is visible, but (whose) hair and limbs are unseen. He knows that all are fine and he is in a state of longing to (see the unseen parts). In the same way, the beauty of the Divine Presence has no limit. If a person is acquainted with much, that which remains is greater; for, there is no limit for His known things. Until one knows all, one has not perceived the entirety of the beauty of the Divine Presence. This is not possible for a human being, either in this world or in the next world, for the knowledge of a human will never be infinite.

So, however much seeing increases in the Hereafter, pleasure increases, and that is without end. When the soul sees that which is present, (the soul's) state is all rejoicing and happiness with that. That is called "familiarity," and it is not the end of longing. When the soul sees that which remains (to be perceived), the state of the soul is seeking and importuning. That is called "longing." There is no limit to this familiarity and this longing, neither in this world, nor in the next. They are always saying in the Hereafter: *O our Lord, perfect our light for us!* (Q. 66:8) For whatever becomes revealed of the beauty of the Divine Presence, all are lights. They have the desire for the totality of that, but they do not have the capacity. No person knows God Most High perfectly except God. Since one cannot know Him perfectly, one cannot see Him perfectly either, but for those full of ardent desire, there is opened a way so that that discovery and that seeing continually increases.

The true nature of infinite pleasure in Paradise is this. If this were not the case, surely the awareness of pleasure would depart, for one does not obtain pleasure from whatever is constant and to which the soul has become accustomed until something new reaches it. For this reason the delight of inhabitants of Paradise is renewed moment by moment, so that in the present, one sees the past as trivial. It increases day by day. Thou hast come to know the meaning of "familiarity" from this principle also, for familiarity augments the state of the soul by that which is present so that one does not pay attention to that which is left behind. If one pays attention, that state is "longing." Therefore, the lovers of God Most High in this world and the next move between familiarity and longing.

In the traditions of David (A), it is related that God Most High said: "O David, inform the inhabitants of the earth that I am the Friend of him who loves Me. I am the Companion of him who sits with Me in seclusion. I am the Intimate of him who becomes intimate by remembering Me. I am the Comrade of him who is My comrade. I am the Chooser of him who chooses Me. I am the Servant of him who serves Me. No servant has loved Me that I did not know that from his soul, and that I did not take (him) as a friend and preferred (him) above others.

Whoever seeks Me will truly find (Me); whoever seeks another will not find Me. O inhabitants of the earth! Continue not in those works by which ye have become beguiled! Turn towards companionship, sitting, and intimacy with Me. Become familiar with Me so that I may become familiar with you. I created the natural disposition of My friends from the natural disposition of Abraham (A) My friend, and Moses, My confidant, and Muhammad (S), My chosen one. I created the souls of my earnest desirers from My Own Light and nourished them with My Own Majesty."

Revelation came to some of the prophets: "I have servants who love Me and I love them. They yearn for Me and I yearn for them. They remember Me and I remember them. They look favorably upon Me and I look favorably upon them. If thou takest their way, I shall befriend thee; if thou turnest away from their way, I shall take thee as an enemy." Concerning love, familiarity, and longing there are many of these and their likes in the Traditions. Let this much suffice.

DISCLOSING THE TRUE NATURE OF CONTENTMENT AND ITS VIRTUE

Know that contentment with the decree of God Most High is the highest of stations. There is no station beyond that, for love is the supreme station; contentment with all that God Most High does is the fruit of love—not the fruit of just any love; rather, it is the fruit of a love which is at perfection.

Concerning this the Messenger (S) said: "*Contentment with the decree is the greatest gate of God.*" He said: "The greatest portal of God Most High is contentment with His decree." When the Messenger (S) asked some people: "What is the token of your faith?" They replied: "We are patient in adversity and we acquiesce with the decree (of God)." He said: "They are wise and learned. They are almost prophets in the greatness of their religious knowledge." And he (S) said: "When the Resurrection occurs, wings will be created for a group of my people so that they may fly to Paradise. The angels will say to them: 'Have ye seen the reckoning, the scales, and bridge (over hell)?' They say: 'We have seen nothing of all those things.' (The angels) will ask: 'Who are ye?' they reply: 'We are of the people of Muhammad (S).' Then (the angels) will say: 'What were your deeds that ye have found such favor?' They will reply: 'Amongst us, there were two traits: one was that we were ashamed before God Most High to commit sins in privacy; the other was that we were satisfied with the little sustenance that God Most High gave us.' The angels will say: 'Then, it is just that ye have this degree!'"

Some of the people of Moses (A) said to him: "Ask of God Most High in what does His pleasure lie so that we may do that." Revelation came: "Be pleased with Me so that I may be pleased with you."

Revelation came to David (A): "What have My saints to do with the sorrows of the world that that sorrow takes away the sweetness of their conversation (with God) from their souls? O David, I desire from My Own friends that they be spiritual. They should grieve for no thing and not tie their hearts to any thing of the world."

And (the Messenger) (S) said: "God Most High says: 'I am that God other than Whom there is no god. Say to whoever does not endure patiently My afflictions and does not give thanks for My blessings and does not acquiesce to My decree: 'Seek another god.'" And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'I have allotted, I have set in order, I have made firm My handiwork. I have commanded all that one may want. Whoever is satisfied, he has My contentment; whoever is not satisfied, he has My anger, until that time when he sees Me.'" And he (S) said: "God Most High says: 'I have created good and evil. Blessed be he whom I created for good! I have made good easy on his hand. Woe unto him whom I have created for evil! I have made evil easy on his hand. Woe unto him who asks why and how!'"

One of the prophets was afflicted for twenty years with hunger, nakedness, and tribulation. He used to supplicate, but there was no answer. Then revelation came: "Before I created the heavens and the earth, this was thy share of My apportioning. Dost thou desire that I start over again the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the management of the kingdom and change what I have decreed so that it may be what thou desirest, not that which I desire, and that affairs become as thou likest, not I? By My power and My majesty, if this again occurs in thy soul, I shall erase thy name from the ledger of prophethood!"

Anas says: "I served the Messenger (S) for twenty years.¹⁷⁵⁴ He never asked: 'Why didst thou do that?' no matter what I did. He never asked: 'Why didst thou not do that?' about whatever I did not do. But, if a person were to quarrel with me, he would say: 'If it had been decreed, it would have happened.'" Revelation came to David (A): "O David, thou desirest and I desire; it is not other than I desire. If thou surrenderest, that which I desire will suffice thee for what thou desirest. If thou dost not surrender, I shall bring thee in grief to that which thou desirest and then it will not be other than that which I desire."

'Umar (bin) 'Abd al-'Aziz said: "My joy is in that which is His decree, whatever that decree may be." He was asked: "What dost thou desire?" He replied: "That which He has decreed." Ibn Mas'ud says: "I prefer to eat fire than to say about something which is not: 'Would that it were!' or, about something which is: 'Would that it were not!'" One of the worshippers amongst the Children of Israel used to strive much in worship for a long time. In a dream, he saw: "Thy companion in Paradise

¹⁷⁵⁴ The corresponding passage in *The Revival* has "ten years."

is such-and-such a woman." Then, he sought her to see her worship. He saw of her neither formal prayer at night nor fasting, not to speak of the (performance of the) religious obligations. He said: "Tell me, what are thy deeds?" She replied: "That which thou hast seen." With much insistence with "Well, tell me," she said: "There is a trait in me that if I am in calamity and illness, I do not wish to be in sound health. If I am in the sun, I do not wish to be in the shade. If I am in the shade, I do not wish to be in the sun. I am content with that which He has decreed." The devout man clasped his hand on his head and said: "This is not a trait; this is a great quality!"

THE TRUE NATURE OF CONTENTMENT

Know that some have said that contentment in adversity and everything that is contrary to desire is not possible; rather, the limit of that is patience. This is an error. Instead, if love has triumphed, contentment in opposition to desire is possible from two aspects:

ONE (ASPECT) is that one becomes so immersed and astonished with love that he is not aware of his own pain, just as the person who in battle is so occupied with anger that he does not feel the pain of wounds. He is wounded, but he has no inkling of that until he sees the blood with his own eyes. And there is the person who walks in some avarice¹⁷⁵⁵ and does not feel the thorns in his feet. When the soul is pre-occupied, there is no awareness of hunger or thirst.

Since all of these are possible in the love for the created and in worldly avarice, why is it not possible in the love for God Most High and the love for Hereafter? It is clear that the beauty of the form of inner qualities is greater than the beauty of the outer form, which in reality is a skin drawn over dung. The eye of insight, by which one perceives internal beauty, is clearer than the external eye which makes many mistakes so that it sees the large small and the distant near.

THE OTHER ASPECT is that one perceives the pain, but as one knows that the approval of the Friend lies in that, one is content. Just as when one's friend orders him to be bled¹⁷⁵⁶ or to take some bitter medicine, one is agreeable to that, in the eagerness that the satisfaction of the friend be obtained. Therefore, whoever knows that the approval of God Most High lies in that he be content with whatever God does to him in the way of poverty, illness, and calamity. He endures patiently and consents, as the person greedy for the world consents to the misery of travel, the peril of the seas, and laborious tasks. Many lovers have reached this degree.

¹⁷⁵⁵ "some avarice" (*hirsī*). AA has "some service" (*khidmatī*).

¹⁷⁵⁶ "to be bled" medically.

(to us)? He has said that whoever acquiesces to (a sin) is a partner in it! And He has said that if a servant of God is slain in the east and some person in the west approves of that, he is a partner in that (crime).

Therefore, although sin is the decree of God Most High, yet it has two sides: one is the servant (of God)'s, and that of his choosing. Its sign is that it is hated by God. The other side is God's; it is His decree and apportioning. So, as for the aspect which has been decreed (by God)—so that the world not be devoid of sin and unbelief—one must be content with that. However, as for the aspect which is the free choice of the servant (of God), the character and sign of that is that God holds him in enmity (for that). One must not acquiesce to that. This is not contradictory. For, if the enemy of a person dies, but the enemy of his enemy remains, he is both saddened and happy, but the happiness is from one aspect and the sadness from another aspect. It would be contradictory if they were both from one aspect.

In the same manner, fleeing from a place where sin prevails is important, as He said: *Bring us out from this town of which the people are oppressors.* (Q. 4:75)¹⁷⁶³ The forefathers always fled from such cities, for sin is contagious. If it is not, its blight and punishment is. As He said: *And guard yourselves against a chastisement which cannot fall exclusively on those of you who are wrongdoers.* (Q. 8:25) If a person is in a place where his eye falls on someone not of the prohibited degrees, he should flee from that place. That is not opposition to contentment (with the decree of God). In the same way, if there is scarcity and famine in a city, it is permissible to go away from that place, except if there be a plague—that is prohibited because, should the healthy leave, the sick will remain lost.

As for other calamities, it is not the same. Instead, inasmuch as He has set the causes, one must comply according to the command and that which is His decree. Therefore, after thou hast complied with the command, one must be content and one must know that one's welfare lies in that. *Peace!*

¹⁷⁶³ This verse was revealed in the context of the early persecution of the Muslims by the people of Makkah, the circumstance that prompted the exodus from Makkah to Madinah (then called Yathrib) in CE 622. This event marks year 1 of the Islamic calendar.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCERNING THE REMEMBRANCE OF DEATH

Know that for whoever has come to know that the end of his affair in all circumstances is death, that his dwelling is the grave, and his guardians are Munkar and Nakir, and his rendezvous is the Resurrection, and his destination is heaven or hell—*We seek refuge with God!*—there is no consideration more important for him than the consideration of death. There is no planning more pressing for him than planning the provision for death, if he be intelligent. As the Messenger (S) said: *"Astute is he who has reined in his self and worked for what is after death."* Whoever remembers death frequently will perforce busy himself with preparing the provisions for that. He will find the grave a garden of the gardens of Paradise. Whoever forgets death, all his ambition is (for) the world and he remains neglectful of the provisions for the Hereafter. He will find the grave a cavern of the caverns of hell. For this reason, remembering death is a great virtue.

The Messenger (S) said: *"Be frequent in the remembrance of the demolisher of (one's) being!"* "O ye people who are occupied with the pleasures of the world! Remember that which devastates all pleasures!" And he (S) said: "If animals were to know that which ye know about the account of death, people would not eat any fat meat."¹⁷⁶⁴ 'Ayishah (R) said: "O Messenger of God, is there anyone of the degree of the martyrs?" He answered: "There is: the person who remembers death twenty times a day." The Messenger (S) passed by some people whose laughter was loud. He said: "Mix into your gathering the remembrance of that which will darken all pleasures." They asked: "What is that?" He replied: "Death."

Anas (R) says that the Messenger (S) said: "Multiply the remembrance of death; that will make thee an ascetic in this world and atone for thy sins." And he (S) said: *"In death there is a preaching."* Death is enough to give counsel to mankind. The Companions (R) heaped much praise upon a person. The Messenger asked: "How is the talk about death on his soul?" They said: "We have not heard him mention death." He said: "Then, he is not as ye suppose him to be." And Ibn 'Umar (R) says: "I went to the Messenger (S) with ten persons. One of the Helpers asked (the Messenger): 'Who is the most astute and the most generous of the people?' He answered: 'He who remembers death frequently and who is active in preparing the provisions for the

¹⁷⁶⁴ That is, the animals which provide our supplies of meat would be emaciated from the anxiety about death.

Hereafter. They are the astute who carried the honor of the world and the munificence of the Hereafter.”

Ibrahim Taymi says: “There are two things which take away the ease of the world from me: one is the remembrance of death, the other is the fear of standing before God Most High.” Every evening, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Aziz assembled the jurisprudents and they would confer with talk of death and the Resurrection until they were weeping like people who have a corpse before them. When Hasan Basri held an assembly, his talk would all be of death, hell, and the Hereafter, and nothing else. A woman complained to ‘Ayishah (R) of the hardness of her own heart. (‘Ayishah) said: “Remember death often so that thou become compassionate.” She did that and the hard-heartedness left her. She returned and gave thanks (to ‘Ayishah).

Rabi‘ Khaytham had dug a grave in his dwelling. He would lie in it several times every day to renew his remembrance of death and would say: “If I forget death for an hour, my soul becomes black.” Someone said to ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Aziz: “Remember death frequently. If thou art in torment, that will console thy soul; if thou art in ease, it will render thee miserable.” Abu Sulayman Darani says: I said to the mother of Harun:¹⁷⁶⁵ ‘Dost thou love death?’ She said: ‘No.’ I said: ‘Why (not)?’ She said: ‘If I become a rebel in my humanness, I do not want to see Him. How can I desire to see the King Most High with many sins?’”

EXCURSUS: [THERE ARE THREE ASPECTS TO THE REMEMBRANCE OF DEATH]¹⁷⁶⁶

Know that there are three aspects to the remembrance of death:

ONE is the remembrance by the heedless. He is involved with the world. He remembers (death) and loathes it, fearing that he will be deprived of the carnal pleasures of the world. As a result, he despises death and says that it is a bad affair that is before (him) and, alas, that this world with all its delights must pass! Remembrance in this manner drives him far from God Most High. However, if in some manner the world becomes a cause of misery for him and his soul comes to loathe the world, it is not without benefit.

THE SECOND is the remembrance by the repentor. He does this so fear will have more domination over him and so that he will become firmer in (his) repentance and be more avid in mending the past. The spiritual reward for this is immense. The repentor does not loathe death.

¹⁷⁶⁵ “the mother of Harun”: This is not a reference to the mother of the Biblical Aaron (Ar. Hārūn). The Harun mentioned is someone else, a contemporary of Abu Sulayman Darani (see Note 574), quite possibly the caliph Harun al-Rashid (rgd. AH170/786CE to AH193/809CE).

¹⁷⁶⁶ From the AA text.

but he loathes the hastening of death, fearing that he will have to go unprepared. Loathing in this manner holds not harm.

THE THIRD is the remembrance by the knower. It is of the promise of the sight (of God) after death, and the rendezvous of the friend is not forgotten. It is always before one's eye. Moreover, he is in the hope of that. As Hudhayfah said at the time of death: "*The beloved has come at (the time of) want.*" The friend has come at the time of need. And he said: "O Lord God, if Thou knowest that I prefer poverty to riches, that I prefer illness to good health, that I prefer death to living, make my death easy so that I may obtain peace of mind by seeing Thee."

Beyond this degree, there is another degree, greater than this, (in) which one does not loathe death, nor does one seek it, nor does one desire either its hastening or its delay. Instead, one prefers that which God has decreed, and he has abandoned his own sway and necessity. He has reached the station of contentment and surrender. This is that time when death comes to his mind. He thinks about death in most states. For if, in this world, one is in (a state of) witnessing, and the remembrance of Him dominates the soul, death and life are both one to him. In all conditions, he will be immersed in the remembrance of God Most High.

THE REMEDY FOR THE REMEMBRANCE OF DEATH'S MAKING AN IMPRESSION UPON THE SOUL

Know that death is a tremendous matter and a great danger, but the people are heedless of that. If they do remember it, it does not make an impression on their souls either; for their souls are so immersed in the business of the world that there is no room left for anything else. For this reason, they obtain no pleasure in the praising and remembrance of God Most High. For this reason, the remedy for this is that one seek solitude and empty the soul for an hour to take care of this—as the person who wants to cross a desert empties his soul of all things for the planning of that—and one says to oneself that death is near and it may be that it will be today. If thou art told to go to a dark vestibule¹⁷⁶⁷ where thou dost not know whether there is a well in the vestibule or a stone on the way, or some void, thou will be very fearful and thy boldness will depart. Well, the obscurity of thine affair after death and thy danger in the grave is not less than that. How dost thou dare to neglect this?

The best remedy for this is that one consider one's own contemporaries who have died. Recall their images: how each one of them was in his own dignity and affairs. How excessive was their delight in the world! How heedless of death they were! Then, suddenly death came and stole them away, a people unprepared. Now, they are in (their)

¹⁷⁶⁷ "the vestibule" (*bālān*): A space between two doors or the outer gate and the house.

graves. How their bodies and limbs have fallen apart! What use are the worms fallen upon their flesh, skin, eyes, and ears making (of them)! They have fallen to this state. Their heirs have divided their wealth and are eating well. Their wives are walking abroad with different husbands and have forgotten them. So, one should meditate upon his contemporaries, one by one, about their recreation, laughter, and negligence; (about) their occupation with the management of affairs so that they labored much for twenty years to achieve what they desired—and their shrouds were being washed in the fuller's shop while they were unaware. Then, one says to oneself: "Thou, too, are like them, and thy heedlessness, greed, and stupidity is like their heedlessness. This good fortune has appeared to thee, that they have gone before thee so that thou mayest learn a lesson. *Fortunate is he who is given counsel through another.*"¹⁷⁶⁸

Then, one looks at one's hands, feet, fingers, (and toes),¹⁷⁶⁹ and at one's eyes and tongue and reflects: all of these will come apart, one from another. Very soon, they will become the fodder of worms. One imagines one's image in the grave: stinking, spoiled carrion, collapsed upon itself. Tell thyself these and their like for an hour each day. Perhaps one will find some awareness of death inside one, because the remembrance of the external has no effect upon the soul. A person always see a corpse being carried and he always thinks of himself as looking on. He thinks that he will be a spectator at death. He has never seen himself dead, and whatever one has not seen, does not come to the imagination. About this, the Messenger (S) said in a sermon: "Thou speakest the truth! This death has not been ordained for us. Thou speakest the truth! These corpses that are being carried are travelers who will soon return. They will bury them in the earth and they will devour their inheritance; and they are heedless about their own (fate)!" Most reasons for not remembering death are the length of hope, and that is the root of all corruptions.

DISCLOSING THE VIRTUE OF SHORT HOPES

Know that from whoever [imagines in his soul]¹⁷⁷⁰ that he will have a long life and that his turn for death will be long delayed, no (beneficial) religious act will come. He says to himself: "There is a (long) time ahead of me. Thou wilt be able to repent and worship whenever thou wishest," and immediately he takes up the way of ease. In

¹⁷⁶⁸ Al-Ghazzali follows the Arabic with a Persian translation, omitted here.

¹⁷⁶⁹ "fingers, (and toes)": In Persian, the same word (*angushtān*) is used for both. Since both hands and feet have been mentioned, we may assume that Al-Ghazzali is referring to the digits of both pairs of limbs.

¹⁷⁷⁰ From the AA text.

any case, when he supposes his death to be near, he busies himself with planning, and this is the root of all kinds of happiness. The Messenger (S) said to 'Umar: "When thou arisest in the morning, say not to thyself that thou wilt be alive in the evening. In the evening, say not to thyself that thou wilt be alive in the morning. Take the provision for death from life. Take the provisions for illness from good health, for thou knowest not what will happen to thy reputation with God Most High tomorrow." And he (S) said: "I do not fear anything for you as much as I fear two traits: following passions and holding the hope for a long life."

Usamah¹⁷⁷¹ bought something on a month's credit. The Messenger (S) said: "Art thou not astonished by Usamah who has bought something on a month's credit? *Verily Usamah has long hopes.* Surely, Usamah has a long hope in life! By that God at Whose command is the breath of Muhammad, I do not close my eyes when I do not suppose that death will come (upon me) before I open them (again). I do not put a bite of food in my mouth when I do not suppose that it may remain in my throat because of death." Then, he said: "O people! If ye have intelligence, consider yourselves dead. By that God at Whose command is the soul of Muhammad, that which has been promised you will come and ye will not obtain any release from it." The Messenger (S), when he spilled water (for purification) would immediately perform the dry purification. They would say that there is water nearby. He would say: "Perhaps I shall not live until we reach the water."

'Abdullah Mas'ud¹⁷⁷² says: "The Messenger (S) drew a square and (then) drew a straight line in the middle of that. From both sides of that line, he drew short lines, and he also drew another line outside that square. He said: 'The line that is inside the square is a human being. The square is the hour of death enclosing him and from which he may not leap out. The short lines on both sides of him (are) the hardships and calamities of his passage. When he escapes one, he falls into another, until he falls down—the falling of death. This line outside the square is his hope and expectation, for he always thinks of some matter that, in the knowledge of God Most High, will be after this death.'¹⁷⁷³

And the Messenger (S) said: "A human being becomes older each day while two things of his become younger: the necessity for wealth and the necessity for life." In the Traditions, it is related: "Jesus

¹⁷⁷¹ Usamah: Usāmah bin Zayd bin Hārithah, a Companion of the Prophet and one of his clients. On the day that the Prophet conquered Makkah, he accompanied the Prophet into the Ka'bah and broke up the idols with him. He was the son of the Prophet's freed slave Zayd and was called the Love of the Messenger of God (*hubb rasul Allah*) because of the Prophet's affection for him. He died AH54/674CE.

¹⁷⁷² 'Abdullah Mas'ud: See Ibn Mas'ud.

¹⁷⁷³ That is, he is planning for some future thing in the expectation of living to accomplish it, while God knows that he will die before that time.

(A) saw an old man working with a spade in his hand. (Jesus) said: 'O Lord God, take hope away from him.' (The old man) dropped the spade and lay down. When an hour had passed, (Jesus) said: 'O Lord God, give him hope.' The old man stood up and resumed work. Jesus (A) asked (the old man): 'What was this?' He answered: 'It came in my soul: why am I working? Thou hast become old and will die soon. I put the spade down. Then, it came again in my soul: Thou wilt certainly need bread until thou diest. I stood up again (to work).'"

The Messenger (S): "Desire ye to go to Paradise?" They said: "We so desire." He said: "Shorten your hope and hold death before your eyes continuously. Have shame before God Most High as is due Him." An old man from Rayy¹⁷⁷⁴ wrote a letter to someone: "After (the salutation), the world is a dream and the Hereafter is awakening and in between is death. All that we are in is confused dreams.

DISCLOSING THE REASONS FOR LONG HOPES

Know that a human being pictures a long life in his soul for two reasons: one is ignorance and the other is the love for this world:

AS FOR THE LOVE FOR THIS WORLD, when it has become dominant, death will take away that friend¹⁷⁷⁵ from him. He will certainly become (death's) enemy and will not be agreeable to it. A human being tosses away all that is not agreeable to him and deceives himself. He pictures all that conforms to his desires in his soul. So, he always supposes that life, wealth, wife, children, and worldly chattels will not cease and he forgets the death which is contrary to his aim. If it occurs to his mind some times, he procrastinates. He says: "Be patient, O man, there is time ahead to prepare for the matter of death." When he matures, he says: "Be patient, O man, until thou becomest old." When he becomes old, he says: "As long as thou hast this life, thou mayst prepare the chattels for this child, thou shouldst get a wife for this son, and (then) thou mayest empty thy heart of them; and thou mayest drain the water from this property so that thy mind will be at ease with regard to food. Then, thou wilt take pleasure in worship. And thou shouldst chastise that enemy who rejoiced at thy misfortune!"

In that manner, he delays until he is at leisure, but from each task, ten more tasks are born. This fool does not know that he will never be free of the world, except by leaving it. So, he supposes that he will have free time, and he delays in the same way, day after day, until

¹⁷⁷⁴ Rayy: the classical Rhages, now a suburb of Tehran. Before the rise of Tehran as the capital of Iran under the Qajars in the late 18th CE century, Rayy was the chief city of north-central Iran for at least two millennia.

¹⁷⁷⁵ "friend": that is, the world.

suddenly death appears and he is left in regret. It is for this that most of the cries from hell are about procrastination. The root of all of these is the love for the world and the neglect of that which the Messenger (S) said: "Love as much as thou wishest; it will be taken from thee."

AS FOR IGNORANCE, it is that one place confidence in youth and not know this much: that before one dies, a thousand children and young people will die and the number old people in the town will decrease, because they do not reach old age, save a few. Also, he supposes that in good health sudden death is remote. He does not know even this much that sudden death is rare, but sudden illness is not remote. All sicknesses are unexpected and when sickness comes, death may come. Moreover, fever is the predecessor of death and the death of a sick person is not unusual.

Therefore, the planning for death must always be placed before one, but like the sun that will quickly fall upon it, not like a shadow that always goes before one and that is never reached.

THE REMEDY FOR LONG HOPES

Know that remedy is the repelling of the causes. When thou hast known the cause, one must occupy oneself in warding it off.

Now, we have stated the remedy for the love for the world in the chapter about Love.¹⁷⁷⁶ In short, whoever knows the world well does not love it, for he knows that its pleasures are but for a few days and they will necessarily be canceled by death. At the same time, (the world) itself is miserable and loathsome and not devoid of grief, and a person is never free of those. Whoever contemplates the length of time of the Hereafter and the brevity of the life in this world knows that selling the Hereafter for this world is like the person who prefers a dirham in a dream to a dinar when awake, for the world is like a dream: *The people are asleep: when they die, they will awaken.*

As for ignorance, one treats it with pure thoughts and true spiritual insight, for one knows that since death is not under one's control, it will not come at the time one wishes (it to do so), so that one could place any confidence in youth or other matters.

THE DEGREES OF LONG HOPES

Know that people differ in this. There is the person who wants to be in the world forever, as God Most High said: *(Each one) would like to be allowed to live for a thousand years.* (Q. 2:96) And there is the person

¹⁷⁷⁶ The preceding chapter.

who desires to attain old age. And there is the person who has hope for no more than a year and does not plan for the following year. And there is the person who has no hope beyond today and does not plan for tomorrow. As Jesus (A) said: "Be not anxious about the sustenance of tomorrow, for if death remains (away), sustenance also remains. If life does not remain, why bear the sorrow of life and the sustenance of others?"

And there is the person who does not even have hope for an hour, just as when the Messenger (S) performed the dry ablution when the water was spilled lest he not (live long enough to) reach water. And there is the person for whom death is before his eye and never absent, as when the Messenger (S) asked Mu'adh about the true nature of his faith. (Mu'adh) said: "I do not lift a foot (to step) that I do not suppose that I will never lift another." Aswad the Ethiopian¹⁷⁷⁷ was performing formal prayer. He was looking from side to side. He was asked: "Why art thou looking about?" He replied: "I am looking to see from which direction the Angel of Death shall appear."

In sum, people differ in this. For everyone whose hope does not exceed a month, there is an excellence superior to him whose hope is for forty days and the effect of that will appear in his behavior. A person for whom two brothers are absent—one who will arrive in a month, the other in a year—makes arrangements for the one who will arrive in a month and delays the arrangements for the other. Thus, there is the person who supposes his hope is short, but whose sign is beginning early, hastening in work, and in considering each breath—one by one—a booty¹⁷⁷⁸ giving him a reprieve. As the Messenger (S) said: "Take five things before five things as booty: youth before old age, good health before illness, wealth before poverty, leisure before occupation, and life before death." And he (S) said: "There are two blessings of which most people are cheated: good health and leisure." And when he (S) would see the signs of heedlessness among the Companions, he would cry among them: "Death has come and has brought either happiness or hardship."

Hudhayfah says: "There is not a day when at dawn a crier does not cry: "O people, *set out! Set out!*" Dawud Tayi was seen hastening to formal prayer. He was asked: "What haste is this?" He replied: "There is an army waiting for me at the city gate—he meant the dead in the graveyard. Until I am taken or not taken, I shall not rise from that place." Abu Musa Ash'ari strove earnestly at the end of his life. They asked him: "What would happen if thou wert to be gentle (with thyself)?" He said:

¹⁷⁷⁷ Aswad the Ethiopian: *Aswad-i Habashī*. There are a number of Aswads in the *Sirah*, but none seem to bear the epithet "Ethiopian" indicating a non-Arab origin. Although Aswad is here used as a proper name, it means "black."

¹⁷⁷⁸ "booty" (*ghanīmat*): an unexpected good fortune; loot taken in war, plunder, spoils. Ghazzali is using it in the sense of an unexpected good fortune.

"Horses that are raced make their greatest effort at the end of the course, and this is the end of the course of my life. Death is come near: I shall not refrain from any effort."

DISCLOSING THE AGONIES OF DEATH AND THE HARDSHIP OF DYING

Know that if a human being had nothing before him except the tearing out of the soul and the hardship of that, he ought to find no pleasure in the world for fear of that—if he had intelligence. For, if he fears that a Turk will enter his house to strike him with an iron-headed mace, he would not have any pleasure in eating and sleeping for fear of that. It may be that (the Turk) will not come, but the coming of the Angel of Death and his taking (one's) life is certain. This is surely more terrifying than the mace of a Turk. Moreover, not fearing (death) is because of heedlessness. The pain of dying is so great that all are in agreement that it is more difficult than that a person be cut to pieces with swords, or that he be torn in two. (This is) because the pain of a wound is from that place where the wound is struck. Awareness reaches the soul and it is apparent how much pain the soul experiences from the sword in the place of the wound. From this the pain increases, moving to all one's parts.

The tearing out of the soul is a pain that appears in the soul itself; all of its parts are drowned in it. The silence of that person is from powerlessness, for his tongue is struck dumb by its severity and the intellect is stupefied. The person knows this who has tasted it, or knows and experiences it by the light of prophethood before tasting it. As Jesus (A) says: "O disciples, offer supplication that God Most High make the giving up of the ghost easy for me; for I so fear death that I shall die of the fear of dying." And at that time, our Messenger (S) was repeating: "*O God, make easy upon Muhammad the agony of death.*" 'Ayishah says: "I have no hope for anyone whose dying is easy. I saw the hardship of the dying of the Messenger (S). During that time he was saying: 'O Lord God, when Thou bringest out the soul from among the bones and nerves, make easy upon me this suffering.'" The Messenger (S) described that pain and said: "Every dying is like three hundred blows with a sword." And he (S) said: "The easiest death is like the thorn which hangs from wool (fabric) and is impossible to remove from it easily until it is pulled and all of the fibers and its parts unravel."

The Messenger (S) went to a sick person at the time of the agony of death and said: "I know what kind of pain is within him; there is not a vein in his body that is not a separate agony." 'Ali (R) said: "Fight in battle until ye are killed, for a thousand blows of the sword is easier for

me than dying.”¹⁷⁷⁹ Jesus (A) passed through a cemetery with a group of the Children of Israel. They offered supplications until God Most High brought (one of the dead) back to life. He said: “O people! What do ye want of me? It has been fifty years since I died, and the bitterness of the agony of death is still with me.”

In the Traditions, it is related: “The agony of death for the believer for whom degrees in heaven remain (to be earned) is hard for him until he achieves them. The agony of death of the unbeliever who has done good works is made easy in exchange for any right due him.” In the Traditions, it is related that sudden death is the ease of the believer and envy of the sinner.” And in the Traditions, it is related: “When Moses (A) died, God Most High said to him: ‘How didst thou find thyself in death?’ (Moses) answered: ‘Like a bird being roasted alive; it cannot fly, nor can it die to escape.’” ‘Umar asked Ka’b Ahbar: “What is the agony of dying like?” (Ka’b) replied: “As though a thorny branch has been put inside a person, each thorn clinging to a vein, and a powerful man is pulling it out.”

THE CALAMITIES OF THE AGONY OF DYING

Know that besides this pain, there are three calamities of terror awaiting one:

ONE (CALAMITY) IS THAT THE FORM of the Angel of Death is seen. In the Traditions, it is related: “Abraham (A) said to the Angel of Death: ‘I desire to see thee in that form when thou takest back the lives of sinners.’ (The angel) said: ‘Thou dost not have the strength to endure that.’ (Abraham) said: ‘It cannot be helped.’”¹⁷⁸⁰ (The angel) showed himself in that form to him. (Abraham) saw a black person, stinking, hair standing on end, wearing black garments, smoke and fire coming out of his nose and mouth. Abraham (A) fell down unconscious. When he came to his senses, the Angel of Death had resumed his own form. (Abraham) said: ‘O Angel of Death! If a rebel (against) God were to see nothing other than thy form, it would be enough!’” Know that the devout will be saved from this terror, for they will see him in a better form, so that if none were to see any comfort except his beauty and form, it will suffice.

Solomon the son of David (A) said to the Angel of Death: “Why art thou not equal among mankind? One thou dost carry off quickly and another thou passest over for a long time.” He answered: “This is not in my hands. I am given a paper with the name of each one. I do as I am commanded.”

¹⁷⁷⁹ ‘Ali (R) was struck by the poisoned sword of an assassin in the month of Ramadan AH40/661CE. He died three days later at the age of 59.

¹⁷⁸⁰ “It cannot be helped”: that is, “Nonetheless I must see it.”

Wahb bin Munabbih (R) says: "One day a king, intending to go for a ride, ordered garments to be brought. He donned one which was finer and in the same way, they brought horses, until he mounted one which was finer and went out with a great entourage. Out of pride, he would not look at anyone. The Angel of Death came before him in the shape of a poor man in dirty clothes. He greeted (the king). The king did not respond. (The angel) seized the reins of the horse. (The king) said: 'Let go! Dost thou know what thou art doing?' (The angel) said: 'O king, I have some business with thee.' (The king) said: 'Wait until I dismount.' (The angel) said: 'No! Now!' (The King) said: 'Speak.' He brought his head to the (king's) ear and said: 'I am the Angel of Death. I have come to take thy soul at this moment.' The king grew pale and his tongue would not work. He said: 'Give me leave to return home so as to bid my wife and children farewell.' (The angel) said: 'No. I shall take thy soul right now.' Having said that, he seized his soul, and (the king) fell off the horse. (The angel) left that place. He saw a believer and said: 'I have a secret for thee.' (The believer) asked: 'What is it?' (The angel) said: 'I am the Angel of Death.' (The believer) said: 'Welcome! It has been a long time that I have been awaiting thee. No one dearer to me than thou will ever come. Here! Take my soul!' (The angel) said: 'Sit down. First take care of the needs and the work that thou hast.' (The believer) said: 'I have no work more important than seeing my Lord. (The angel) said: 'Now, I shall take thy soul in whatever state thou desirest.' (The believer) said: 'Wait until I perform an ablution and stand in formal prayer. When I have prostrated myself, take my soul.' And he did thus."

And Wahb bin Munabbih said: "In some land, there was a king than who no one was greater. The Angel of Death seized his soul. When he went to heaven, the angels said: 'O Angel of Death, hast thou never felt mercy for the person whose soul thou takest?' He answered: 'There was woman in the desert, pregnant. She gave birth to a boy. I was commanded to take the life of the mother. I took the soul of the mother of that child and I left the infant lost in the desert. I felt compassion for that child and his mother, the (the child) remained lost in that loneliness and weakness.' The angels said to the Angel of Death: 'Didst thou see that king with all that greatness, like no other on the face of the earth, whose soul thou just tookest?' He answered: 'I did.' They said: 'He was that child thou didst leave wandering in the desert.' (The Angel of Death) exclaimed: "*Glory be to the Gracious One for what He wills!*"

In the Traditions, it is related that on the night of the middle of (the month) of Sha'ban¹⁷⁸¹ a paper is given to the Angel of Death. The name of every person whose soul is to be taken in the coming year is

¹⁷⁸¹ Sha'ban: the eighth month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

written upon that sheet: one builds, one weds, one litigates—yet their names are written on that (paper).

A'mash says: "The Angel of Death went to Solomon (A). He stared at one of (Solomon's) boon companions. When (the angel) had gone out, the boon companion asked (Solomon): 'Who was that who was staring at me?' (Solomon) said: 'The Angel of Death.' (The companion) said: 'Is it that he will take my soul? Command the wind to carry me to India so that, if he returns, he will not see me.' (Solomon) commanded the wind to do that. Afterwards, the Angel of Death returned immediately. Solomon (A) asked him: 'What was the reason for thy staring repeatedly at my boon companion?' (The angel) answered: 'I had been commanded to take his soul at that moment in India while he was here. I asked myself how he could travel to India in an hour. I was astonished when I went there and found him there. I took his soul.'" The point of this story is that there is no escaping the meeting with the Angel of Death.

THE SECOND CALAMITY is seeing the two angels who are appointed over every person. In the Traditions, it is related that both come with death to see him. They say to the servant of God, if he is devout: "*May God reward thee with good!* Thou hast performed many acts of devotion in front of us and thou hast delivered much ease to us." But, if the servant is a rebel (against God), they say: "*May God not reward thee with good!* Thou hast committed many disgraceful acts and sins in front of us. This is at that moment in the agony of death when the servant (of God) looks outside at the air, his eyes not yet shut.

THE THIRD CALAMITY is that, at the time of dying, he sees his place in heaven or hell, for the Angel of Death says to the devout: "Good news to the friend of God! Thou art bound for heaven!" And to the sinner, he says: "Good news to the enemy of God! Thou art bound for hell!" The pain of this is added to the pain of the agony of dying. And, *the refuge is with God*, these are the terrors one sees in the world, and they are trivial (in comparison) with what he will see in the grave and after that.

DISCLOSING THE WORDS OF THE GRAVE WITH THE CORPSE

The Messenger (S) said: "At the time when the corpse is placed in the grave, the grave says: '*Woe unto thee, O son of Adam! In what deception hast thou come to me? Didst thou not know that I am the house of misery, the house of darkness, the house of loneliness, and the house of worms? By what wert thou deceived? When passing over me wondering, thou wert placing one foot before me and the one after (me)!'* If he is a righteous, a person answers on his behalf: 'What art thou

saying, O grave? He has been just and has enjoined good and prohibited evil.' (The grave) says: 'Surely, I shall transform into a green garden for him! Then, his body will become a luminous light and his soul will go to heaven.'"

In the Traditions, it is related that when the corpse is placed in the grave and it is tormented, its neighbors (in the graveyard) call out to it: "O straggler, thou at least wert left behind and we came before. Why didst thou not learn a lesson from us? Didst thou not see that we came before and our deeds were cut off and thou hadst received a respite? Why didst thou not provide for that which was lost to us?" In that way, all corners of the ground will cry out: "O deceived by the appearance of the world! Why didst thou not take a lesson from those who have gone before thee and who were deceived as thou wert?"

In the Traditions, it is related that when a befitting servant (of God) is placed in the grave, his good deeds surround him and take him down, protecting him. When the angels of torment appear at his feet, formal prayer stands forward and says: "No! He has stood much for the sake of God Most High." When they come from the side of the head, fasting says: "No! He has endured much thirst in the world." When they appear from the side of his body, Pilgrimage and fighting in defense of the faith say: "No! He has suffered much in his body." When they appear from the direction of his hands, charity says: "No! Withhold your hands from him, for he has given away much with that hand." The angels say: "Be happy and blessed!" The angels of mercy come and lay a carpet from heaven in his grave and they make the grave as broad and open for him as the eye can see. They bring a lamp of the light of heaven so that he may be in its light until the Day of Resurrection.

'Abdullah bin 'Ubayd¹⁷⁸² says that The Messenger (S) said: "When the corpse is placed in the grave, it hears the sound of the footsteps of the people who had come following the bier. No one says anything to him except the grave, which says: 'Have they not told thee much about my nature, terror, and narrowness? Now, what hast thou brought for me?'"

THE QUESTIONING BY MUNKAR AND NAKIR

The Messenger (S) says: "When a servant (of God) dies and is placed in the grave two angels come, both with black faces and blue eyes. The name of one is Munkar and the name of the other is Nakir.¹⁷⁸³ They say: 'What dost thou say about the Messenger?' If he is a believer,

¹⁷⁸² 'Abdullah bin 'Ubayd: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁷⁸³ Munkar and Nakir: see Note 353 in the First Pillar.

he says: 'He was the servant of God; he was the Messenger of God, and I testify that God is One and Muhammad is His Messenger.' Then the grave broadens for him to seventy cubits by seventy cubits¹⁷⁸⁴ and becomes flooded with light. They say: 'Sleep.' He says: 'Let me go to my own people and speak with them.' They say: 'Sleep as brides sleep, a sleeping in which nothing will awaken thee except those whom thou lovest.' But, if he is hypocrite, he answers: 'I do not know, but I have heard from people who said something and I said it too.' Then, they say to the earth: 'Come together.' It contracts upon him until all his sides reach each other and he remains suffering thus until the Resurrection.

And the Messenger (S) said to 'Umar: "O 'Umar, how dost thou see thyself when thou diest and thy folk place thee in a grave four cubits by a cubit and a half?"¹⁷⁸⁵ At that time, they will wash thee and put a shroud (on thee), place thee in the grave, fill it with earth and go away. Friends will come to the grave—Munkar and Nakir—their voices like thunder, their eyes like lightning, their hair trailing on the ground. They thrust aside the earth of the grave with their teeth and seize thee and shake thee.' He said: 'O Messenger of God, will I have my reason?' He said: 'Yes.' ('Umar) said: 'Then I shall have no fear and I will suffice for them.'"

In the Traditions, it is related: "Two beasts are put in charge of the unbeliever in the grave, both blind and deaf. In the hand of each one is a staff of iron. They will beat him on the head, as on a bucket with which water is given to camels, until the Resurrection. They have neither eyes to see and have mercy, nor ears to heed his cries." 'Ayishah (R) says: "The Messenger (S) said: 'The grave presses so as to press the corpse. If anyone has ever escaped that, it would be Sa'd bin Mu'adh.'" Anas (R) says: "Zaynab, the daughter of the Messenger (S), received the command. She was placed in the grave and the face of the great Messenger (S) became pale. When he came away, his color became normal again. We asked: 'O Messenger of God, what happened?' He said: 'I recalled the falling into the grave and its torment. I was informed that they had been easy with her. With all that, the pressure pressed her grave so that its noise was heard throughout the world.'" And the Messenger (S): "The torment of the unbeliever in the grave is that ninety-nine monstrous reptiles¹⁷⁸⁶ are appointed over him. Dost thou know what those monstrous reptiles are? Each is a snake with nine heads. They bite him, they lick him, they blow upon him until on the Day of Resurrection." And the Messenger (S) said: "The grave is the first house

¹⁷⁸⁴ There are roughly two cubits to the yard, so the grave becomes about 35 yards square; approximately a quarter of an acre.

¹⁷⁸⁵ Al-Ghazzali uses another word for "cubit" here: *gaz*. The grave is thus about six feet by two and one quarter feet.

¹⁷⁸⁶ "monstrous reptiles": Ghazzali uses the word *azhdahā*, often translated "dragon."

of the houses of the Hereafter. If it is passed easily, then that which follows it will be easier. If it is difficult, that which follows it will be harder and more difficult."

Know that which follows this: First, the terror of the trumpet's blast; then, the terror of the Day of Resurrection: its length, heat, and sweat; then, the terror of the presentation of the review and the questioning about sins; then, the terror of the giving of the scrolls into the right hand and the left hand; then, the terror of disgrace and shame that will appear from that; then, the terror of the (weighing in the) scales, as to whether the pan of good deeds is heavier than the pan of bad deeds; then, the terror of the grievances of opponents and the answering to them; then the terror of the (narrow) bridge (that spans the fires of hell); then, the terror of hell and its guardians, fetters, neck-chains, (the tree of) *Zaqqum*,¹⁷⁸⁷ the fire-pit, snakes, scorpions, and torments. The torments are of two kinds: physical and spiritual. We have related the physical punishments at the end of *The Revival* in detail—we related all that has come down about them. As for those which are spiritual, we have related them in the Prolegomena of this work. In the same way, we have discussed the true nature of the reason for death, the true nature of the soul and its states after death—all in the Prolegomena. Whoever desires to learn the details of the physical punishment should refer to *The Revival*. Whoever desires to know the spiritual punishment should refer to the Prolegomena of this work, because recounting them in this book¹⁷⁸⁸ would be difficult, and we shall content ourselves with the amount that has been noted here lest the book become (too) lengthy.

(VISIONS OF THE SAINTS CONCERNING THE DEAD)

Let us conclude the book with stories of the visions that the saints have seen concerning the states of the dead.

Know that there is no way for the inhabitants of this world to the knowledge of the states of the dead except by means of inner revelation, either in dreams or while awake. Moreover, there is no way to them by means of the senses; for (those states) are in another world and all of (our physical) senses are deprived of perceiving them, as the ear is deprived of the perception of colors and the eye is deprived of the perception of sounds. Indeed, there is in a human being a special faculty by which one may see the inhabitants of the other world; however, that special attribute is hidden by the crowding of the senses and the (distracting) business of

¹⁷⁸⁷ "the tree of *zaqqūm*"; mentioned in the Quran in three places (37:62; 44:43; 56:52), a tree called the "food of the sinner" in Q. 44:44. Traditions and Commentators have elaborated and amplified its unpleasantnesses.

¹⁷⁸⁸ Here, Ghazzali is speaking of the Prolegomena as though it were a separate unit from the four Books of the main body of the text.

the world. When one finds release from that business in sleep, one's state grows closer to them, and their states stand revealed. It is also through that special faculty that they are informed of us so that they may delight in our good deeds and sorrow at our sins, as has been related in the Traditions.

The fact is that our knowledge of them and their knowledge of us are not without the intermediacy of the Preserved Tablet, for our states and their states are inscribed upon the Preserved Tablet. When that connection falls to the mind of a human being in sleep, he learns of their states from over there; and when that connection falls to them, they learn of our states. The similitude of the Preserved Tablet is a mirror in which are the forms of all things. The human soul is also like a mirror, as are the souls of the dead. Therefore, just as the reflection of something appears in another mirror, it appears in us and in them by means of the Preserved Tablet.

Do not suppose that Preserved Tablet is a physical (body), rectangular, (made of) wood, cane, or something else that one would be able to see with the external eye and to read what is inscribed upon it. Instead, if thou desirest to learn a similitude for it, search in thyself too, for the parallel of all that is in creation has been placed in thee, so that by their means there is a way to the knowledge of all of them. However, since thou art heedless of thy self, how dost thou come to know this? The illustration of this is the brain of the reciter of the Quran who has memorized the entire Quran. Thou mayst say that it is all inscribed in his brain and he looks at it and the letters, but if a person cuts his brain into tiny pieces and examines them with the external eye, he will not see the Quran, nor will he see the writing.

Therefore, thou must consider the inscribing of affairs on the Preserved Tablet as being of this kind, for unlimited matters have been inscribed upon it, while thine eye is nothing other than finite. The infinite in the finite in a perceptible form is not possible and it cannot take form (in it). Consequently, His Tablet, His pen, and His hand resemble nothing of thine, just as He does not resemble thee. Instead, it is as has been said: "Everything of the house resembles (its) master."

The point of this is that thou not consider it impossible for (the dead) to have knowledge of us and for us of them, as we see in dreams. Seeing the dead in dreams in good states and bad states is a great proof of their being alive, either in ease or in torment. It is not that they are not, and it is not that they are dead. As He said: *Think not that those who are slain in the way of God as dead. Nay! They are living; they have provision with their Lord.* (Q. 3:169)

DISCLOSING THE STATES OF THE DEAD WHICH HAVE BEEN REVEALED THROUGH DREAMS

The Messenger (S) said: "Whoever sees me in a dream has seen me, for Satan cannot come in my image." 'Umar (R) said: "I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream, his head heavy over me. I asked: 'What has happened?' He said: 'Art thou not the one who kissed his family¹⁷⁸⁹ while fasting?'" 'Umar had never done such a thing, even though it was not prohibited; but not doing so is better. Leniency in such details is not given to the truly righteous, even though it is to others.

'Abbas (R) says: "I had a friendship with 'Umar. I wanted to see him after his death, so after a year I saw him. He was scraping his eyes. He said: 'I have just now been released. My affair was in danger had it not been that the Lord was generous.'" 'Abbas says: "I saw Abu Lahab in a dream. He was burning in fire. I asked: 'How is it with thee?' He replied: 'I am always in torment except on Monday eves¹⁷⁹⁰ because the Messenger (S) was born on a Monday eve. I was given the good news of that and out of that joy, I had freed a slave. As the spiritual reward of that, the torment is taken away on Monday eves.'" "

'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz says: "I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream sitting with Abu Bakr and 'Umar. When I sat with them suddenly 'Ali (R) and Mu'awiyah were brought, sent into a room, and the door closed. When I saw him after he had come out, he said: "*By the Lord of the Ka'bah, it was decided for me!*" That is: "My right was established." Then Mu'awiyah came out quickly and said: "*By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I was forgiven!*" That is: "I was forgiven and pardoned."¹⁷⁹¹

Before Husayn was killed, Ibn 'Abbas once woke up from sleep and said: "*Verily we belong to God and to him we are returning.*" (Q. 2:156) They asked: "What happened?" He said: "They have killed Husayn." They said: "What dost thou know?" He said: "I saw the Messenger (S), a drinking glass (filled with) blood with him. He said: 'Dost thou not see what my people have done after me? They have killed my (grand)son Husayn and this is his blood and that of his companions. In complaint of (that) tyranny, I am taking it before God Most High.' Then, twenty-four days later the news came that (Husayn) had been killed."

¹⁷⁸⁹ "family" here is a euphemism for "wife" or "women."

¹⁷⁹⁰ "Monday eves": that is Sunday evenings. According to the Islamic (and Jewish) calendar, the day starts at sundown. Hence, the European New Year's Eve and Christmas Eve.

¹⁷⁹¹ This refers to the dispute over the succession to the caliphate between 'Ali and Mu'awiyah that culminated in the battle of Siffin in CE 648 and the assassination of 'Ali in CE 661. See any standard reference on Islamic history.

(Abu Bakr) Siddiq was seen in a dream. They said to him: "Thou didst always point to thy tongue and say: 'This has put matters before me.'" He replied: "Yes, because of the *there is no god but God* I used to say, heaven has been placed before me." Yusuf bin al-Husayn¹⁷⁹² was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee?" He answered: "He has been merciful." He was asked: "For what?" He said: "Because I never mixed the serious with jesting."

Mansur bin Isma'il¹⁷⁹³ says: "I saw 'Abdullah Bazzaz¹⁷⁹⁴ in a dream. I asked: 'What has God Most High done with thee?' He answered: 'He forgave me for all the sins I have confessed, except one sin which I was ashamed to confess. He stood me in sweat until the flesh fell off me.' I said: 'What was that?' He said: 'Once I looked at a boy and found him handsome. I was ashamed to confess that.'"

Abu Ja'far Saydalani¹⁷⁹⁵ says: 'I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream. A group of the poor, that is, Sufis, were sitting with him. Two angels descended from heaven, one with a ewer in his hand, and the other with a basin in his. The Messenger (S) washed his hands and the poor washed theirs. Then, they placed it before me so that I might wash my hands. One said: 'Do not pour water for him, for he is not one of them.' I said: 'O Messenger of God, it is related that thou hast said: 'Whoever loves a people is of them, and I love these people.' The Messenger (S) said: 'Pour water, for he is of them.'"

Majma'¹⁷⁹⁶ was seen in a dream. He was asked: "How didst thou find thine affair?" He said: "The ascetics have carried off the good of the world and the Hereafter." Zurarah bin Abi Awfi¹⁷⁹⁷ was seen in a dream. He was asked: "Of deeds, what hast thou found better?" He replied: "Contentment with the decree of God and short hope."

¹⁷⁹² Yusuf bin al-Husayn: Yūsuf bin al-Husayn al-Rāzī, Abū Ya'qūb, a 3rd Islamic (9th CE) century disciple of Dhu al-Nun (see Note 789). He served a large number of shaykhs. (Hujwiri)

¹⁷⁹³ Mansur bin Isma'il: Abū al-Hasan Mansūr bin Ismā'il bin 'Umar al-Tamīmī al-Miṣrī, a noted Shafi'ite theologian and jurist. Born at Ra's 'Ayn in Syria, he studied with Shafi'i's companions and then settled in Egypt, hence the sobriquet *al-Miṣrī* (the Egyptian). He died AH306/918CE.

¹⁷⁹⁴ 'Abdullāh Bazzāz: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁷⁹⁵ Abu Ja'far Saydalani: Abū Ja'far Muḥammad bin al-Miṣbāḥ al-Saydalānī, a late 4th or early 5th Islamic (10th CE) century follower of the teachings of Husayn Hallaj (see Note 1685). Hujwiri considers him a great shaykh with many disciples, established in Syria-Iraq and a "modern," though deceased by his time.

¹⁷⁹⁶ Majma': No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁷⁹⁷ Zurārah bin Abi Awfi: an early Shiah theologian, d. AH150/767CE. He argued against the proposition that there is no intermediate position between the believer and the unbeliever.

Yazid bin Madh'ur¹⁷⁹⁸ says: "I saw Awza'i¹⁷⁹⁹ in a dream. I said: 'Inform me of a deed which is better so that I may draw closer to it.' He said: 'I have seen no degree higher than the degree of the learned. Surpassing those, is the degree of the sorrowful.'" This Yazid was an old man. After that, he always wept until he received the command and his eyes darkened. Ibn 'Uyaynah¹⁸⁰⁰ says: "I saw a brother in a dream. I asked: 'What has God done with thee?' He answered: 'He forgave all the sins for which I asked forgiveness, but he did not forgive those for which I did not ask forgiveness.'"

Zubaydah¹⁸⁰¹ was seen in a dream. She was asked: "What has God done with thee?" She answered: "He has been merciful." She was asked: "Because of the wealth thou didst spend on the road to Makkah?" She said: "No, for the reward for that went to its lord."¹⁸⁰² He forgave me because of my intention."

Sufyan Thawri was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "I placed one foot on the bridge (over hell) and the other in Paradise." Ahmad bin (Abi) al-Hawari¹⁸⁰³ says: "I saw my wife in a dream with a beauty I had never seen. Her face was radiant with light. I asked: 'What is this light on thy face?' She said: 'Dost thou remember that on such-and-such a night thou didst remember God Most High and wept?' I said: 'Yes.' She said: 'I rubbed thy tears on my face. All of this radiance is from that.'"

Kattani¹⁸⁰⁴ says: "I saw Junayd in a dream. I asked: 'What has God done with thee?' He said: 'All of those acts of worship and instructions were nothing. They were blown away by the wind and resulted in nothing, except for the two-bow formal prayer I would perform at night.'"

Zubaydah was seen in a dream. She was asked: "What has God done with thee?" She answered: "God has had mercy upon me for these four utterances that I used to say: *Finish my life with 'There is no god but God'; enter (me) in my grave with 'There is no god but God'; leave me*

¹⁷⁹⁸ Yazid bin Madh'ur: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁷⁹⁹ Awza'i: Abū 'Amr 'Abd al-Rahmān bin 'Amr, born at Baalbek (Lebanon) AH129-30/747CE, he died at Beirut AH157/773-4CE. An important jurisprudent, he is mentioned in Fihrist, Qushayri, etc.

¹⁸⁰⁰ Ibn 'Uyaynah: See Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah, Note 990.

¹⁸⁰¹ Zubaydah: the wife of Harun al-Rashid (see Note 1007). The daughter of Ja'far, she is famous for her love of finery and culture as well as her donations to religious establishments. She died AH216/831CE.

¹⁸⁰² That is, the reward for the money spent went to him whose money it was. As usual, Ghazzali is impugning the lawfulness of the money of rulers, suggesting that the money was not hers to spend, but God rewarded her for her intention.

¹⁸⁰³ Ahmad bin Abi al-Hawari: see Note 566.

¹⁸⁰⁴ Kattani: Abu Bakr Kattani: see Note 855.

alone with 'There is no god but God'; and make me meet my Lord with 'There is no god but God.'"

Bishr was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He replied: "He has been merciful and said to me: 'Hadst thou no shame before Me that thou didst fear Me so harshly?'" Abu Sulayman was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He was merciful and did not make it a loss for me that this people pointed at me; that is, that I was famous among the religious."

Abu Sa'id Kharraz¹⁸⁰⁵ says: "I saw Iblis in a dream, I took up a cudgel to strike him, but he had no fear and was not afraid. An unseen voice called: 'He does not fear that; he fears the light that is in the soul.'" Masuhi¹⁸⁰⁶ says: "I saw Iblis in a dream naked. I said: 'Art thou not ashamed before men?' He said: 'They are not men. If they were men, I would not play with them as a child plays with a ball. Men are a different group, who make me ill and emaciated.' He was referring to the Sufis." Abu Sa'id Kharraz says: "I was in Damascus when I saw the Messenger (S) in a dream, coming and leaning on Abu Bakr and 'Umar, may God be pleased with them. I was reciting a verse of poetry and striking my finger on my breast."¹⁸⁰⁷ He said: 'The evil of that is greater than its good.'"

Shibli was seen in a dream three days after his death. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He was strict in the accounting with me so that I despaired. When He saw my despair, He had mercy upon me." Sufyan Thawri was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He answered: "He was merciful." He was asked: "What is the condition of 'Abdullah Mubarak?'"¹⁸⁰⁸ He said: "Every day he is twice granted an audience to see God Most High."

Malik bin Anas was seen in a dream: He was asked: "What has God Most High done with thee?" He replied: "He was merciful with a word that I had heard from 'Uthman bin 'Affan which he would say when he saw a bier: '*Glory be to the Living One Who does not die!*'" On the night that Hasan Basri received the command, he was seen in a dream, the gates of the heavens were flung open and a herald was crying: "Hasan Basri has seen God and He was pleased with him."

Junayd saw Iblis naked in a dream. (Junayd) asked: "Hast thou not shame before people?" He answered: "These are not people. People

¹⁸⁰⁵ Abu Sa'id Kharraz: Abū Sa'id Ahmad bin 'Īsā al-Kharraz, an ascetic of Baghdad who was accused of heresy. He fled first to Bukhara, then Egypt. Hujwiri says he was the first to define *fanā* (self-annihilation in God), though others attribute this to Bayazid (see Note 1327). He died AH286/899CE. (Bagley)

¹⁸⁰⁶ Masuhi: No other information about him from available standard sources at present.

¹⁸⁰⁷ He was singing the verse and striking his finger on his breast in time with that.

¹⁸⁰⁸ 'Abdullah Mubarak: See Ibn al-Mubarak (Note 660).

are those who are in the Shuniziyah Mosque¹⁸⁰⁹ who keep me tormented and lean." He said: "In the morning, I went to the Mosque of Shuniziyah. When I entered, I saw (the people) in meditation, heads placed upon their knees. They said: 'Be not deceived by the words of that accursed defiled one.'"

*Utbah al-Ghulam saw of one of the fair ones of Paradise in a very splendid form. She said: "O 'Utbah, I am in love with thee. Beware! Do not do anything that will keep me from thee!" 'Utbah said: "I shall divorce the world thrice and not hang about it so that I may reach thee." Abu Ayyub Sijistani saw the bier of a corrupt man. He went up to a high place so as not to perform the (funeral) prayer for him. That dead man was seen in a dream. He was asked: "What has God done with thee?" He replied: "He had mercy upon me and said that thou shouldst tell Ayyub: *Say: If ye possessed the treasures of the mercy of my Lord, ye would surely hold them back for fear of spending!*" (Q. 17:100) That is: "If the treasures of the mercy of God were in thy hands, thou wouldst not spend of them out of miserliness."

The night that Dawud Tayi received the command, someone saw in a dream that the angels of heaven were coming and going. He said: "What night is this?" They said: "Tonight Dawud Tayi has received the command and the heavens are being decorated for him." Abu Sa'id Shahham¹⁸¹⁰ says: "I saw Sahl Su'luki¹⁸¹¹ in a dream. I said: 'O master!' He said: 'Leave the mastership, for that has departed.' I asked: 'What have all of thy deeds and acts gotten?' He said: 'They had no benefit, except (my) answering the questions that old women would ask.'"

Rabi' bin Sulayman relates that Shafi'i, may God have mercy upon him, says: "A difficult matter came before me that has me perplexed. In a dream, I saw some who came and said: 'O Muhammad bin Idris, say: *O God, I do not control for myself profit, nor loss, nor death, nor life, nor the Resurrection. I am not able to take except that which Thou givest me. I cannot protect myself from anything save from that which Thou protectest me. O God make me favored and successful for that which Thou dost love and approve of good words and deeds.*' When I arose in the morning, I offered that supplication. That problem became easy (for me) in the forenoon. Thou must not forget that supplication."

Someone says: "I saw 'Utbah al-Ghulam in a dream. I asked: 'What has God done with thee?' He replied: 'He has forgiven (me) for that supplication written on the wall in thy house. When I woke up, I

¹⁸⁰⁹ The Shuniziyah Mosque was a well-known mosque in Abbasid Baghdad.

¹⁸¹⁰ Abū Sa'id Shāhḥām: Qushayri (b. AH376/989CE, d. AH465/1072CE), saying that he heard it from Abu Sa'id himself, records the same anecdote in a somewhat fuller version.

¹⁸¹¹ Sahl Su'luki: Abū al-Tayyib Sahl bin Muḥammad bin Mūsā bin 'Isā bin Ibrāhīm Su'lūkī, died AH404/1013CE. A Sufi master.

looked and saw the writing of 'Utbah al-Ghulam: *'O Guide of those who have strayed, O Giver of mercy to sinners, O Overlooker of the lapses of those who slip! Have mercy upon Thy servant who is in great danger and upon the Muslims all of them together. Place us with the living who enjoy (Thy) sustenance, those whom Thou hast favored of the prophets and the truly righteous and the martyrs and the doers of good. Amen, O Lord of the worlds!'*""

Let this much that has been related about death suffice. We finish this book upon this and we hope that whoever reads this book and who derives benefit from it will not forget to supplicate on behalf of the author of the book and to ask God Most High to pardon and forgive him so that if any error, lapse, or defect has found its way into the discourse, or if any dissimulation or hypocrisy has become mixed with the intention, God Most High, with His favor and generosity and the blessings of their supplications, may overlook them, and this book may not be without a portion of spiritual reward. For, there is no fraud greater than this, that a person invite the people to God and then, because of a regard for the people, be veiled from God Most High. *We seek refuge with God from that. Then we say at the conclusion of the book:*

O God, surely we seek refuge with Thy pardon from Thy punishment; we seek refuge with Thine approval from Thy displeasure; we seek refuge with Thee from Thee. Innumerable are Thy praises. Thou art as Thou hast praised Thyself. Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds; blessings upon Muhammad and his good and pure family.

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This is not a bibliography devoted to Ghazzali and his works but rather to the sources used in preparing this translation. Neither is it an exhaustive list of all the books I have consulted in preparing this translation and the notes, but it does give the chief ones. When a work is noted (usually by the abbreviation at the end of the bibliographical reference) at the end of a footnote between parentheses, it indicates that it was the principal source for the note, although works may have been consulted.

For the translation itself, in addition to the basic texts edited by HK and AA, I have consulted standard references (cited by the abbreviated names used in the list below at the end of the entry) including the dictionaries of Steingass, Aryanpour, Mu'in, Hughes, Nadwi; translations of the Holy Quran by Pickthall, Yusuf Ali, Muhammad Ali, Arberry, etc., and the Holy Bible (King James and Revised Standard versions).

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